

# Class Struggle in Socialist Poland



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# Class Struggle in Socialist Poland

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With Comparisons to Yugoslavia

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Albert Szymanski

PRAEGER

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To my grandparents, John and Josephine Szymański, who left 70 years before, and to the hundreds of thousands of Poles who died fighting czarism, military dictatorship, fascism (German and domestic), and the A.K., so that a better Poland might come into being.

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## Preface and Acknowledgments

My grandparents, John and Josephine Szymański, left Wasikow, Poland, in 1907 and 1910, respectively. Some say I should be thankful. They spent the balance of their lives as textile workers in Shelton, Mystic, and Stonington, Connecticut. Although a lifelong anticleric and militant unionist, my grandfather was far from a political radical. I thank both grandparents for the many stories that captured my childhood imagination. As was so often the case, my father rejected his Polish ethnicity, expressing no desire to have anything to do with things Polish (other than food). I then grew up in a small, largely second- and third-generation Italian-American mill town on the Connecticut-Rhode Island border, with no awareness of Polish ethnicity.

During the 1970s, however, as I became involved in analyzing the nature of the Soviet Union and its international relations, I became increasingly interested in Polish society. This slowly growing interest blossomed with the Polish crisis of 1980–81. I then made every effort to comprehend the Polish developments, discovering much theretofore hidden by the hegemonic ideology that blinded all of us who grew up in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s. I was quite surprised to learn, for example, that, contrary to everything I had been led to believe, by both the mainstream media and schools and my long association with various New Left currents, there was an authentic and massive socialist revolution in Poland, as in most of the rest of Eastern Europe, in 1944–48. Poland had a long history of a strong Marxist movement that, blossoming in the grievous crisis provoked by the Nazi devastation, restructured Polish society in a manner that qualitatively improved the lives of the common working people. No longer were people like my grandparents forced into the factories at ten years of age after two or three years of schooling, then forced to emigrate in order to survive.

In addition to my Polish grandparents, I would like to thank my Italian grandfather, Joseph DePerry, born in Sicily (and also an anticleric), and my “swamp-Yankee” grandmother, “Dede.” Their stimulation over the years was also an important part of growing up. My parents, Verna and Albert, second-generation Americans, shaped by families structured in the Old World, are also much appreciated for the motivations they induced in me.

Among others I would like especially to thank for their role in shaping this book are Lynda Sharp, my editor at Praeger, who has consistently been so supportive; Vicki Van Nortwick, who typed the bulk of the manuscript; and Linda Kelm, Barbara Kosydar, and Evelyn Marchuk, the secretaries in the University of Oregon Sociology Department who have been so helpful over the years.

Thanks also go to Michelle Amieux, Donna Rae Crawford, Carolyn Dornsife, Catherine Duriez, Claudia Zabandin, Val Burris, Michael and Sandi Francisconi, Michael Goldstein, Suzy Kawalchek, Charlie Kaften, Jerry Lembecke, and Jim Salt for their stimulation and support during this manuscript's production.

As with my book on the USSR, the principle of using almost entirely pro-Western, anti-Communist sources to establish the facts, then interpreting these facts within the framework of Marxist class analysis, is utilized. The historiographically sound principle that if those who are arguing against a hypothesis provide evidence in favor of it, such evidence has a high probability of being true, underlies this method.

We are lucky not only in having a rather rich literature on Poland, as is the case with the USSR, but also in having a well-developed sociological establishment in Poland that for years, and especially during 1980-81, has produced objective information on Polish public opinion. The fact that Poland has been relatively open to Westerners since the mid-1950s has also greatly facilitated the accumulation of facts about that society in the West. I then would like to thank all those whose research and writing have made this work, based in part on such rich sources, possible.

The last two years of the Carter administration, together with those of the Reagan administration, witnessed a crescendo of hostility in the public media directed against the USSR. This encompassed a long series of media events, which included the "discovery" of Soviet troops in Cuba, the flight of "boat people" from Cuba and Indochina, the Soviet "invasion" of Afghanistan, and the "Korean Airline massacre," as well as Soviet "intervention" in Poland during 1981. By all indications the motive behind this attempt to shape U.S. and world public opinion was the combination of the growing wave of revolutions in the mid-1970s—Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Angola, Lebanon, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, Ethiopia, Iran, Nicaragua, Grenada, Afghanistan in 1978, El Salvador—and the



growing Soviet willingness to lend support to these revolutions. With U.S. public opinion mobilized in fear of the "Soviet threat," those who make and benefit from U.S. foreign policy would be able to put great pressure on the Soviets, largely through rapid rearmament (up to attempting to acquire nuclear first-strike capacity), to reverse their support for world revolution, and to enable the United States once again to intervene at will in the less-developed countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America—as it had before the war in Vietnam.

A central part of this media campaign in the 1980–1983 period was the celebration of Solidarity and its leader, Lech Walesa, in the West. The celebration of Solidarity reached across the entire political spectrum from extreme right to extreme left. The most antiunion, right-wing, probusiness forces in the United States, together with the Reagan administration—while it was viciously suppressing the strike of air traffic controllers in the United States, as well as lending massive support to murderous antiworking-class forces in Central America and Southeast Asia—blossomed into militant trade unionists supporting unions in Poland. The Reagan administration's position was shared by most of the left in the United States. In fact, the left and the right vied with each other in their respective celebrations.

The great media outpouring concerning the Polish events of 1980 and 1981 contained very little of an objective or analytical nature. Indeed, it was largely designed to play on and build up anti-Communist sentiments. Contrary to the prevailing mode of discourse on Poland, this book will attempt an analysis of the causes and dynamics of the Polish crisis of 1980–81. The historical roots of that crisis in 100 years of Polish history, the actual role of the Soviet Union, the Socialist revolution of 1944–48 and its effects on transforming Polish society, the cycle of crises in postwar Polish socialism, the role of the intellectuals, of the Church, and of the Communist Party are all given lengthy attention. In Part III a systematic comparison with Yugoslavia is made in order to project what might have happened in Poland had the leftists among Solidarity intellectuals gotten their way. Throughout, the role of classes and the struggle among classes, so often deeply buried under institutional covers, is kept central. Exception is taken to the Western position that Solidarity and Lech Walesa were the incarnation of all that is good and beautiful in the world. A more realistic and nonromanticized evaluation is made of the nature of the events of 1980 and 1981.



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## Introduction

Popular explanations of the 1980–81 crisis in Poland tend to attribute the causes of events to the “inevitable breakdown” of “alien” institutions forced on Poland by the Red Army after World War II—this mode of explanation can take the form of arguing that socialism of any type cannot work, or that the Soviet model, or perhaps just the Soviet model in Poland, is not viable; that the Polish Communist Party followed seriously mistaken policies—it failed to sufficiently mobilize or educate the people, it was responsible for serious economic “mismanagement” of the economy; or that Polish workers were attempting to overthrow a new ruling class composed of Party officials and enterprise managers. It is my contention that none of these explanations is valid.

I will argue that the 1980–81 events, as were previous crises in Poland, were on one level a manifestation of a fundamental, long-term tension within the socialist movement between the relative strengths and weaknesses of two models of socialist transition: emphasis on central planning with rapid industrialization vs. emphasis on markets, consumption, and decentralized worker participation; that the Polish crisis was a manifestation of a long-term, fundamental class struggle, which occurs in most socialist societies, between the intelligentsia and the manual working class; that economically successful revolutions in the poorer countries are necessarily faced with a serious problem in the second generation, produced by rapidly rising expectations and the preference of those born in the new society to adopt the material living standards of the wealthiest industrial countries rather than those of their parents; and that the particular intensity and shape of events in Poland have been a product of the historically specific Polish experience.

It will be shown that, contrary to the impression of many in the West, the Polish working class has a long revolutionary tradition, and that Marxism has deep roots in this class. Further, it will be demonstrated that there was a genuine working-class/peasant revolution in Poland in 1944–48 that was protected, but in no way caused, by the presence of the Soviet Army. The Polish revolutionary process, in fact, was very similar to that which has occurred in many other countries, such as Korea, Bulgaria, Nicaragua, and Czechoslovakia.



The special problems of Polish socialism, then, must be attributed to the unique factors that affected the early development of socialism in Poland. The most important of these were the relative weakness of the Communist Party in 1938–44; the intensity of the cold war crisis of 1948–55, which forced an artificially rapid pace of industrialization; and the exceptionally strong role of the Catholic Church and the chauvinistic traditions of the Polish intelligentsia.

The relative weakness of the Party in the preliberation period meant that its considerable popularity in the postwar period lacked the depth that most other major parties had, a depth that could sustain its leadership in adversity. It also meant that the Party was led to compromise with the Church, the peasants, and the intellectuals. These three compromises, while temporarily putting off crisis, aggravated the underlying problems of Polish socialism. The failure to transform the Church into a progressive institution and to mobilize the bulk of the intellectuals for socialist transition meant that two alternative ideological centers able to interpret discontent continued to exist. The failure to modernize agriculture, and the resultant gross inefficiency of food production, forced the state to rely on excessive external loans, which led to the economic disaster of the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The lack of sufficient depth of popular commitment to the Party to carry it through the crisis years of 1948–55 on the basis of ideological commitment—as the Cuban and Vietnamese Parties could have, because of their deep roots—meant that the Party in Poland became dependent on rapidly rising living standards to secure legitimacy and continued support for Socialist transition. For a generation, in fact, the Party was very successful in rapidly industrializing the country and raising worker and peasant living standards. The crises in Polish socialism (1956, 1970, 1976, and 1980–81) were all immediate responses to the failure of living standards to rise as rapidly as expectations.

The most recent crisis was the most fundamental because the generation-long trend of rapid modernization in Polish society created impossible expectations; a tremendous gap between rising expectations and living standards was caused by the refusal of the Western banks to continue to finance the expansion in Polish living standards. It must be stressed that neither the mass membership of Solidarity nor the bulk of working-class participants in previous public manifestations have been opposed to socialism, nor have their

protests been directed primarily against the Communist Party's general leadership of Polish society. The thrust of working-class participation in strikes, demonstrations, and "independent" trade unions has, rather, been focused on two issues: an increase in living standards and the institutionalization of a more decentralized model of socialism. However, working-class discontent on these two questions has been manipulated by strongly anti-Communist intellectuals who assumed leadership of Solidarity in the fall of 1981 with the intention of overthrowing the regime. The consequence of their success might well have been the destruction of any form of socialism in Poland.

The first part of the book is devoted to a general  
survey of the history of the subject. The author  
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# The Background of the 1981 Crisis

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It is impossible to comprehend the meaning of the events of 1980 and 1981 without a thorough understanding of both modern Polish history and contemporary Polish social and economic conditions. In this section an attempt is made to analyze the background of the crisis. Chapter 1 examines the origins and development of the Marxist movement in Poland and the Polish state between the wars. The German occupation of World War II, the resistance movement, and liberation by the Red Army in 1944–45 are analyzed in detail, since this was the crucial period for the formation of contemporary Polish institutions.

In the period 1944–48 Poland, contrary to what is assumed by almost everyone in the West, experienced an authentic and essentially indigenous working-class revolution. Its development is treated in Chapter 2, which also presents a history of the worker protest movements of 1956, 1970, and 1976—the predecessors of the explosion of 1980–81.

Chapter 3 deals with the economic and social development of Poland since World War II, with emphasis on the process of industrialization and the development of a high level of social equality. In Chapter 4 the special problems of Polish agriculture are treated and the role of the peasantry in Polish society and politics is examined. The unique history of the Polish intelligentsia is treated, and special attention is given to how pro-Western, anti-Communist, and nation-

alist attitudes came to be so strong among its members. Finally, the role of the Soviet Union both in assisting Poland's Socialist revolution and in Polish society since that time is examined, as well as the Soviet motives and concerns in Poland and the rest of Central Europe.

Throughout this section emphasis is given to comprehending developments in Polish society in terms of classes and their struggles.

# The Polish Socialist Movement

## — 1 —

### The Development of the Polish Socialist Movement Until World War II

Marxism has a long and deep history in the Polish working class. As part of the Czarist Empire—economically integrated into it since the 1860s—Poland was the most industrial region. In 1890 Poland was responsible for about one-quarter of all industrial production in the empire while containing only about 7 percent of the people. Between 1860 and 1910 the number employed in industry (on the present Polish territory) increased from 12 to 43 per 1,000 (Matejko, 1974:82). The rapid industrialization of the country after the 1860s brought with it the rapid growth of a proletariat as well as the massive displacement of the peasantry, millions of whom migrated overseas in search of work, mostly to the United States (Dziewanowski, 1976:10).

The first Socialist circles in Russian Poland were student study groups set up in the early 1870s. In 1876–78 a leader of one of these student circles, Ludwik Warynski (a son of the Polish gentry), whose ideas were a mixture of Mikhail Bakunin and Karl Marx, got a job in a Warsaw factory and soon created a Socialist workers' circle (the "resistance funds"). These self-help groups had about 250 members and considerably more working-class supporters. The movement was repressed by the czarist police in 1878, but was revived as the first Polish Socialist party (the Proletariat) in 1882, formed out of the



remnants of both the student socialist circles and the workers' self-help groups started by Warynski.

The new socialist party led a strike at a textile factory near Warsaw in which several thousand workers participated. The strike was suppressed by the Russian army, which killed 3 workers and wounded 15. In the two years after this strike was suppressed, about 200 Socialists were arrested, 4 were hanged, and many others were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for their involvement in the strike. The severe repression destroyed the Proletariat as an organization (Dziewanowski, 1976:11-18).

On May Day 1892 a strike wave led by the Union of Polish Workers (organized in 1888) swept Warsaw and many regional cities in Russian Poland; the workers demanded an eight-hour day plus a 15 percent wage increase. The police suppressed these strikes, killing 46 workers and wounding 200. Once again the wave of arrests following these strikes crippled the organized movement, and once again working-class socialism was at a low ebb in Poland.

With the removal of Bismarck's anti-Socialist laws in the German Reich, Polish workers in German Poland were recruited in large numbers into the German Social Democratic Party (SPD). After 1890 socialism quickly developed support among Polish workers in Silesia (Dziewanowski, 1976:19). In 1892 a separate Polish Social Democratic Party of Galicia and Silesia (SDPGS) was formed, encompassing the workers' movement of both Austrian and German Poland. Also in 1892 a meeting was held in Paris of representatives from the remnants of various Marxist working-class groups from Russian Poland that formed the Polish Socialist Party (PSP). The PSP essentially adopted the orthodox Marxist programs of the German SPD but with a nationalist twist, demanding the independence of Poland from the Czarist Empire. The SDPGS closely coordinated its efforts with the PSP (Dziewanowski, 1976:19-20).

Many Polish socialists, including Rosa Luxemburg, opposed to the nationalist current of the new PSP, refused to join it, instead founding, also in 1892, a separate Marxist party, the Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland (SDKP). The SDKP accused the PSP of "social patriotism"—and in turn was accused by the PSP of being "traitors"—for refusing to adopt a nationalist program. The SDKP, unlike the PSP, stressed close collaboration with the Russian Marxists and rejected the goal of Polish independence as "irrelevant under



capitalism and unnecessary under socialism." In 1899 the SDKP merged with a similar Lithuanian group to form the SDKPL.

From 1896 to 1905 the PSP dominated the labor movement of Russian Poland, while the SDKPL had significant support in Lithuania and among Polish craftsmen, especially the cobblers of Warsaw. The Jewish Bund developed strength among Jewish workers in this period (Dziewanowski, 1976:25). After 1900 the SDKPL began to grow—partly in response to the new Russian Social Democratic Party that had been founded in 1898—especially in Bialystok, Lodz, and Warsaw. The SDKPL sent representatives to the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party, where it opposed Lenin's thesis of the right of nations to self-determination. In fact, Rosa Luxemburg, who had become the chief figure in the party, made rejection of that thesis the nonnegotiable condition of the SDKPL merger into the Russian Social Democratic Party (Dziewanowski, 1976:34). The SDKPL, like the Bund, insisted on preserving the integrity of the Russian state as a potential revolutionary base that would facilitate socialist revolution throughout the empire. The PSP, meanwhile, kept the Russian Marxists at arm's length.

The crisis precipitated by Russia's defeat by Japan in the war of 1904–05 led to the rapid growth of both major Marxist parties. Massive worker demonstrations in late 1904 and in 1905 were bloodily repressed. The PSP instructed its members and followers to fight actively against the government, while the SDKPL limited itself to small-scale armed acts, a policy for which it was criticized by the Bolsheviks. There was a successful general strike in Poland on January 22, 1905, supported by all the socialist groups. In the wake of general disorder and violent clashes between workers and the state, civil authority in much of Poland almost collapsed. In spite of bloody repression the strike wave continued through most of the year. On May Day 1905 about 100 demonstrators were shot by the police in Warsaw. A virtual insurrection occurred in Lodz, where workers erected barricades and hundreds were killed or wounded (Dziewanowski, 1976:44).

As a result of unexpected revolutionary ferment demonstrated by the Russians in the 1905 revolution, the PSP position against the SDKPL was weakened because it had consistently denied the revolutionary potential of Russia; it had based its strategy, instead, on a successful insurrection in Poland—an insurrection it was not able to

put together. At its 1906 congress the PSP's left wing won control of the party. The Socialists then rejected the idea of leading a national uprising to separate from Russia, renouncing the right-wing socialists' continuing guerrilla war effort, and instead proclaimed social revolution as the goal of the party, thereby shelving the independence plank. The party's military organization, led by Joseph Pilsudski, refused to accept the decision of the new leadership to cease armed actions. As a consequence the Pilsudski faction was expelled in November. The PSP thus effectively divided into two parties, with the majority faction, the PSP-Left, moving close to the SDKPL (Dziewanowski, 1976:48-49).

At the Fifth Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party, held in 1907, 40 of the 305 delegates were from the SDKPL (representing 25,000 members). The SDKPL gained a representative on the 14-person Central Committee, on which it tended to side with the Bolshevik faction against the Mensheviks.

The waning of revolutionary energy in Russia after 1905, together with the imposition of martial law in Poland—declared in November 1905 and implemented by 300,000 Russian troops, the prosperity of 1907-14, the legalization of trade unions and peaceful strikes, and a new insurance law that guaranteed most of a worker's salary in case of accident or illness led to a decline in the revolutionary energies of the Polish working class. Further, both the PSP-Right and the SDKPL became engrossed in factionalism. In the interim between the revolution of 1905 and World War I the PSP-Right, led by Pilsudski, gained in strength relative to both the PSP-Left and the SDKPL (Seton-Watson, 1951:37; Dziewanowski, 1976:42, 54).

Upon the outbreak of war between Germany/Austria and Russia in 1914, the SDKPL, the PSP-Left, and the Bund set up a joint committee to coordinate opposition to the imperialist war through a general strike. Russian Poland was occupied by Austria and Germany in 1915 for the duration of the war. The war saw the scattering of Polish Marxist leaders throughout Central and Eastern Europe. Those who found themselves in Russia generally got caught up in the enthusiasm of the Bolshevik Revolution—some, in fact, becoming important leaders of the Bolsheviks (for instance, Feliks Dzierzynski and Karl Radek). Others, such as Rosa Luxemburg, who had consistently involved herself in both the Polish and the German Social Democratic Parties, spent the war in Germany. Immediately after its conclusion they were caught up in the revolutionary upheaval of the



German working class; Luxemburg, for instance, was a leader of the Spartacus League. Millions of Polish workers (a disproportionate number of them skilled) who had spent the war in Russia or Germany were also, in good part, swept up by the revolutionary energy in both countries. When these workers returned after the war, they brought their revolutionary energy with them. In the chaos of the collapse of Germany in November 1918, an amorphous independent Polish state was declared with Joseph Pilsudski, who had left the PSP-Right in 1916 to devote himself full-time to the nationalist movement, becoming head of state.

Polish workers replicated the workers' councils movement that had engulfed Russia in February 1917 and Germany in November 1918. Several thousand workers' councils were organized in Poland by both the Marxist and the moderate parties. The Marxists regarded these councils as the organs of an emerging dictatorship of the proletariat, and in fact they served as the basis of a dual power situation for several weeks. In the Warsaw councils the PSP-Right and its allies at first had a slight majority over the SDKPL and PSP-Left coalition (Dziewanowski, 1976:70-73).

In December 1918 the two main Marxist parties, the PSP-Left and the SDKPL, merged to form the Polish Communist Workers' Party (PCWP). During the winter of 1918-19 the new PCWP remained fairly strong in the workers' councils throughout Poland. The program of the unified party was essentially that of the SDKPL and Rosa Luxemburg. While calling for all power to the workers' councils, it rejected the Leninist position on both the national and the peasant questions, refusing to endorse either the Bolshevik notion of the right of nations to self-determination or Bolshevik support for individual distribution of the land to the peasantry.

In the elections to the central bodies of the Warsaw workers' councils held in December 1918 and January 1919, the new Communist Party won 297 delegates and the reconstituted reformist and nationalist PSP received 303, leaving the two Jewish Socialist parties holding the balance. In parts of the more industrial regions of the country, the Communists obtained an absolute majority of the votes cast in elections for delegates to the councils. In June 1919 the PSP delegates, frustrated by the leftist dominance of the Warsaw councils, withdrew from them, leaving them in the unquestioned control of the Communists. But the councils were soon repressed by the new Polish state as part of its anti-Communist campaign, leaving the gov-

ernment in firm control of the country (Dziewanowski, 1976:82-83; Dobbs et al., 1981:16).

The Communist Party was banned in February 1919, and it remained illegal until Poland was liberated by the Red Army in 1944-45. The PSP-Right, meanwhile, formally merged with the Social Democratic parties of Austrian and Prussian Poland, and after a bitter fight with the new PCWP gained the leadership of the Polish trade union movement. The PSP affirmed its adherence to "Democratic Socialism," affiliating with the reformist Second International, while the PCWP affiliated with Lenin's new Third International.

The PCWP picked up considerable support in early 1921, recruiting discontented members from various other left groupings, as well as others increasingly disillusioned with the independent Polish state. The year 1921 witnessed an economic recession as well as a national strike wave. In 1921, 21 percent of union members in Poland belonged to Communist-led unions (Burks, 1961:65). During the 1920s the party picked up considerable support from among the Ukrainian, Belorussian, and Jewish minorities, large numbers of whom identified with developments in Soviet Russia (Dziewanowski, 1976:97-99). At its Second Party Congress, held in Moscow in 1923, the PCWP finally renounced its opposition to the principle of the right of national self-determination and individual land distribution to the peasants (Dziewanowski, 1976:103). It thus formally broke with its Luxemburgist roots, although many members continued to hold their traditional sympathies. It should be noted that the pre-1923 position of the party on the peasant question led it largely to ignore work among that class.

In 1926 Poland experienced a serious economic crisis. About one-quarter of the industrial labor force became unemployed. In March and April there were massive and sometimes violent demonstrations by the unemployed. In early May 350,000 marched through Warsaw. The Communist International considered Poland to be on the verge of revolution. Zinoviev announced, "If there is one land in which an immediate revolutionary situation might crystallize in a comparatively short time, it is Poland" (cited in Dziewanowski, 1976:117). On May 13 a general strike was proclaimed, and the Communists called for union of all leftist groups, arming of the workers, and the overthrow of the government. In the middle of the gen-



eral strike and the resulting chaos, General Joseph Pilsudski, with the support of the PSP, organized a military coup d'état and overthrew the government, installing himself as military dictator. Pilsudski immediately arrested many Communist activists and leaders, holding them until the country was pacified (Dziewanowski, 1976:118-19).

In the years immediately after the Pilsudski coup, the membership and support of the PCWP grew considerably. The new emphasis on both the peasant and national questions proved quite successful in building support for the party among sections of the peasantry, especially among the national minorities of the Polish Ukraine and Belorussia. The party developed considerable strength among landless peasants in central Poland, especially in Lublin and Kielce provinces, as well as among Ukrainian and Belorussian peasants. In 1932 the PCWP was composed of 39 percent workers and 41 percent peasants (Burks, 1961:35). In the elections of 1928, 73 percent of all Communist votes came from rural areas (Burks, 1961:42). A few months after the Pilsudski coup, a group of leftists in the PSP broke off and established a new Marxist party, taking the traditional name PSP-Left, which henceforth collaborated with the Communists. In the Warsaw city council elections of 1927, the Communist Party's candidates more than doubled their share of the vote over their 1922 total (Burks, 1961:158).

In the elections of March 1928, the last "more or less free election" to be held in Poland before World War II, Communist candidates polled almost 1 million votes (8 percent of the total, more than double what the Party had obtained in 1922). It has been estimated that if the elections had been totally free, the Communists would have done somewhat better (Burks, 1961:67). This was almost as much strength as a Communist Party demonstrated anywhere outside of Germany in the late 1920s. While in the country as a whole the Socialists got about 14 percent of the vote (Burks, 1961:67), in Warsaw the Communists outpolled the PSP. The PCWP won seven Sejm seats in Warsaw, two in Lodz, and three in the industrial Dabrowz Basin, where the party was traditionally strong. Twelve Marxists who collaborated with the Communists were also elected, mostly from the Ukraine and Belorussia. Together they represented about 5 percent of all Sejm delegates (Dziewanowski, 1976:127, 134). About three-quarters of the Communist circle in the Sejm were from minority groups, mostly Ukrainians and Belorussians (Burks,

1961:82-83). It should also be noted that the Party recruited disproportionately from among Jewish workers. In 1933, 26 percent of Party members were Jewish (Burks, 1961:160).

The Polish trade union movement was dominated by the PSP throughout the interwar period. In 1930 the Pilsudski dictatorship, attempting to undermine the Social Democratic leadership of the working class, but meeting with only limited success, set up its own "official" unions. In spite of the government repression, the leftist-led trade union movement grew in strength during the 1930s. In 1936-38 there was a series of massive strikes, many of the sit-in variety, with the Communists playing an active role, especially in organizing the sit-ins (Dziewanowski, 1978:134). In 1936 there were 2,056 recorded strikes in Poland, many of them sit-ins. The 1936 strike wave involved 675,000 workers in 22,000 factories, with a loss of almost 4 million worker-hours. There were approximately 800,000 industrial workers in large and medium industry at this time (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:3). Although the Communists maintained a strong position in the Polish working-class movement throughout the interwar period, the Social Democrats had greater support, especially among organized workers—in 1939 the PSP, in spite of the repression, still had over 30,000 members.

There was little peasant national or class consciousness in Poland before World War I. But after the war both began to develop. Finally, in 1931 a unified peasant party was formed from a number of smaller peasant organizations. Although it claimed 300,000 members at its founding, it is probable that its real membership was considerably under 100,000. Almost all of these, however, were actually peasants (Seton-Watson, 1951:32; Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:35). The Polish Peasant Party was part of the broad growth of peasant populist radicalism that swept the Eastern European countryside in the interwar period. Its politics, in fact, were very similar to those of the left of the U.S. People's Party in the late 1880s and early 1890s. Central to its program were the demands to restrict and eventually eliminate the capitalist "middlemen" (bankers, traders, wholesalers), and for the public ownership of such essential services as transport and power, as well as many large industrial enterprises, including mining and primary industries. The Peasant Party favored cooperativism, hoping to build up an alternative network of supply and distribution independent of middlemen.



The Peasant Party was opposed to the military dictatorship, advocated parliamentary forms, supported the unionization of workers, and advocated a share in the control and profits of private enterprise for the working class (see Mitrany, 1951:144-47). It led numerous militant actions, including peasant strikes, during the 1930s. These culminated in a rural strike wave in August 1937 that was met with bloody armed repression by the military government. During the 1930s the Polish peasant movement became increasingly radicalized in the face of extremely depressed economic conditions and the failure of the government to deliver on its promise of land reform (see Seton-Watson, 1951:32-33). The Peasant Party came to work with the Polish Socialist Party, with which it shared similar ideas on many questions.

The Peasant Party established close relationships with the PSP. It was clear to all that had free elections been allowed in Poland in the last half of the 1930s, a PSP-Peasant Party coalition would have assumed control of the government and instituted a radical restructuring of society. In the face of increased support for the radical left, the Pilsudski government increased repression; there were no more even semi-free elections after 1928. In 1934 the leaders of the rapidly growing Communist Party were arrested and interned at a newly established concentration camp for political dissidents (Dziewanowski, 1976:127; Seton-Watson, 1951:38; Dobbs et al., 1981:19). After Pilsudski's death in 1935, a heavy-handed semifascist military dictatorship was instituted.

With the rapid deterioration of economic conditions in the early 1930s, the Communists gained strength among both the unemployed and the landless peasants. The Party organized a number of major demonstrations of the unemployed (Dziewanowski, 1976:134). In 1935, adopting the new Popular Front line of the international Communist movement, the Polish Communists began to emphasize the progressiveness of Polish nationalism, as well as to make great efforts to establish a united front with the Social Democrats and the Jewish Bund. The Communists won support among progressive Catholics, among the youth groups of the Social Democratic and Peasant parties, and in the universities (Dziewanowski, 1976:145, 146). The Communists were able to organize a respectable contingent, the Dabrowski Brigade, to aid the Spanish Republic in the war against fascism in 1937. The Dabrowski Brigade, although Communist-led,



was supported by the largely PSP-led Polish Trade Union Federation as well as by the Jewish Bund.

In 1938 the Communist Party was swept up in the paranoia that affected the Soviet Union, which was under intense pressure from rapidly militarizing and expanding Japanese and German imperialism. The Communist International officially dissolved the PCWP, accusing it of being hopelessly infused with "Trotskyite" and "Luxemburgist" sentiments.\* While the Comintern's claims about conscious subversion of the revolutionary process and aid to Germany were paranoid illusions, and the dissolution of the PCWP was totally unjustified, it was a fact that Luxemburgist sentiments, especially on the peasant and national questions, ran deep among large numbers of the PCWP (especially its older leaders and rank-and-file members who grew up in the old SDKPL), and that the leadership had mostly supported Trotsky in the mid-1920s struggles with Stalin and Bukharin (see Dziewanowski, 1976:135-38, 146-54). In the hysterical atmosphere of the late 1930s, this was enough for the Comintern to take the heavy-handed action it did.

### The Nature of the Polish State 1918-39

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Poland was the largest and one of the more powerful countries of Europe. Its territory incorporated not only ethnic Poland but also Lithuania, most of Latvia, Belorussia, and the Ukraine. During this period it had a seacoast on both the Black and the Baltic seas. The majority of those subject to its rule were not ethnic Poles, although most of the landlord class was ethnically Polish. In this period Poland and the rising Russian state contended for hegemony in Eastern Europe. In the mid-seventeenth century a Polish army almost conquered Moscow. However, during the eighteenth century the Polish Empire was greatly weakened from within by the opposition of the Polish ruling class to the crea-

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\*At the 20th Party Congress of the Soviet Party, held in February 1956, a special committee set up to investigate the 1938 dissolution of the PCWP issued a communiqué that renounced the 1938 Comintern decision to dissolve the PCWP as having been made on the basis of "materials which were falsified by subsequently exposed provocateurs" (Dziewanowski, 1976:257).

tion of a strong central state or the building of an urban economy—two things that the Russians, in good measure under the leadership of Peter the Great, did accomplish. As a result the Polish state disappeared in a series of conquests, and was permanently partitioned among Prussia, Austria, and Russia in 1772, 1793, and 1795. The great bulk of the Polish Empire, including all of Lithuania, Belorussia, most of the Ukraine, and the bulk of ethnic Poland, was incorporated into the Czarist Empire. The question of which Slavic state was to be hegemonic in Central and Eastern Europe was settled.

Subordination in the Russian Empire was especially humiliating to the Polish landlords and the closely related intelligentsia, who had for so long regarded themselves as “civilized,” Western, and superior to the “half Asiatic,” “barbarian,” and “backward” Russians. The Polish elite prided itself on its use of the Latin alphabet—as opposed to the Russian use of the Cyrillic, which had been specially designed to transcribe the sounds of the Slavic tongues—as well as its adherence to the Roman version of Christianity, rather than to the Orthodox (and “Asiatic”) Russian version. Polish nationalism, based on both the memory of a great imperial Poland and direct subordination to the Czarist Empire, grew during the nineteenth century among the Polish middle classes as well as among the landlords, who continued in their position throughout the area of the old Poland. These classes organized rebellions against the Russian Empire in 1830 and again in 1863. The suppression of each rebellion was followed by more intensive repression. In 1831 the czar took away Polish autonomy, and in 1864 he began a campaign of thorough russification, prohibiting the use of the Polish language in schools or government institutions. Through most of this period Polish nationalism, like early nationalism in the rest of Europe, was largely confined to the urban classes (especially the middle class) and landlords. Until the independence period it found relatively little response among the peasantry (see Matejko, 1974:61; Aronowitz, 1973:164; Mitrany, 1951:ch. 9).

The mutually devastating war between the partitioning powers, Germany and Austria on the one side and Russia on the other, gave the Polish middle and upper classes their chance to reconstitute the Polish state. Joseph Pilsudski in 1916 organized a military contingent of ethnic Poles that fought on the side of the Austrians and Germans against the Russians, in the expectation of being allowed to reconstitute Poland after the conquest of most of Russia. As a reward



Pilsudski was made nominal head of a formally independent state proclaimed in Russian Poland (occupied by Austria and Germany). However, real power remained in the hands of the Germans. In protest Pilsudski resigned in July 1917 and was consequently imprisoned. At the end of the war he was released. Returning to Warsaw on November 10, 1918, he was proclaimed chief of state by the middle and upper classes on the basis of his war record.

The new Bolshevik government in Russia immediately recognized the independence of Poland, acting in accordance with the Bolshevik principle of the right of nations to self-determination, which had been so vehemently opposed by the SDKPL. On September 3, 1918, the Soviet government declared void all czarist diplomatic treaties pertaining to the partition of Poland. In November, after the establishment of the Polish state, the Bolsheviks recognized the independence of the Polish nation. The Russians made no attempt whatsoever to resist the formation of an independent Poland (Horak, 1961:27-28).

The nationalist government under Joseph Pilsudski, which consolidated its control over the new Polish state during the first half of 1919, was set on reestablishing the 1772 boundaries of the Polish Empire. In pursuit of this goal Pilsudski attacked Russia, which had been greatly weakened by two years of civil war, in order to conquer all of the Ukraine and Belorussia. After the Russians repelled the Polish invasion, the Red Army pursued the Polish army to the outskirts of Warsaw, carrying the revolution into Poland—the Bolsheviks, in fact, established a temporary workers' government in Bialystok, after taking that city in early 1921. The Polish Communist Party actively supported the Red Army's intervention in Poland, seeing it as a decisive ally in bringing the Polish working class to power. The Pilsudski government, supported by the PSP, however, was able to rally most of Poland behind the government, and consequently to defeat the Red Army outside of Warsaw. Forced to retreat from Poland, and tired from three years of civil war, the Bolshevik government signed a peace treaty (the Treaty of Riga) with the Polish regime establishing the boundary between the two countries 200 miles east of the Curzon Line recommended by the Americans and British as the natural eastern boundary of Poland (the Curzon Line was defined as the point at which the majority of the population was no longer ethnically Polish). Thus, the western third of both Belorussia and the Ukraine became incorporated into the new Polish state, and

Poland was institutionalized as a colonial power with a significant minority population.

Pilsudski, a former Socialist and still holding somewhat progressive views, obtained the backing of many workers and peasants, especially the right wing of the Social Democratic Party, which he had left in 1916. A fairly progressive republican constitution was adopted in 1921, but it was effectively suspended in 1926, when a military coup made Pilsudski virtual military dictator (his powers grew over the next ten years). A new authoritarian constitution was implemented in April 1935 to replace the 1921 document. After Pilsudski's death in May 1935, Marshal Edward Rydz-Smigly, and then General Josef Beck, became military dictators of an increasingly repressive semifascist regime.

Few of the promised social reforms of the early republic were realized. As political life settled down, it became clear that Poland was ruled by the wealthy landlords, who controlled most of the countryside, and the bourgeoisie, who dominated the economic life of the towns. When they could no longer rule through parliamentary forms, they installed an increasingly conservative, but still fairly popular, Pilsudski as head of a military government. The crisis of Polish society heightened during the 1930s. The regime became more and more repressive in the face of growing popular opposition. Nationalist rhetoric, anti-Semitism, and fascistic symbolism became increasingly current.

Throughout the period of domination by the chauvinistic bourgeoisie and large landlords, the Polish economy stagnated. Industrial output exceeded that of 1913 only in 1929. In the mid-1930s roughly 50 per 1,000 people were employed in industry, compared with 43 per 1,000 in 1907-10. Foreign capital was responsible for roughly half of industrial investment (Matejko, 1974:82). The Polish industrial economy was crippled by the loss of its traditional Russian market, by the powerful landlord class (which did not favor industrialization policies), and by the catastrophic effects of war and depression.

In the countryside semifeudal relations of production were largely maintained on most of the best land, which remained generally in large estates. During the independence period the lot of the small independent peasants worsened with the declining prices of their crops. In 1920, 77 percent of economically active Poles were employed in agriculture; in 1933, 66 percent. The latter figure pretty



much held until 1944–45. As late as 1950, 57 percent of Poles were still peasants (Allardt and Wesolowski, 1978:39, 41). In 1920 only 10 percent of Poles were employed in industry or construction; in 1930, 16 percent. The latter figure had increased only slightly by 1945. The output of electrical energy in kilowatt-hours per capita in Poland increased from 55 in 1923 to only 121 in 1938. (In the same period Finland, also once a part of the Czarist Empire, increased its electricity output from 102 kilowatt-hours per capita to 850.)

In the 1930s rural children received, on the average, four years of education. Only about 1 percent of children from worker or peasant families attended secondary schools, which were mostly privately financed. In 1935, 25 percent of adult Poles were illiterate. Needless to say, virtually no peasants or workers attended college. Infant mortality was 140 per 1,000 live births, whereas at the same time it was 56 per 1,000 in the United States (see U.S. Army, 1973:88).

Although the government played with fascist rhetoric and instituted increasingly authoritarian practices during the 1930s, it never fully installed a regime like that of Hitler, although it might be reasonably compared with that of General Franco in Spain. Some of the colonels who played a leading political role between 1935 and 1939, however, believed in and advocated full-fledged fascism of the Italian or German type (for instance, Colonel Koc, the founder of the Camp of National Unity). So did the Union of Young Poland, an anti-Semitic youth group sponsored by the government. The National Democratic Party, the principal party of the urban middle class, which had been the largest party in 1918–26, before the Pilsudski coup put it into opposition, became increasingly influenced by fascism during the 1930s. The National Democrats remained the principal party of the urban middle class until the German conquest in 1939. In the late 1930s it was an extremely nationalist, chauvinist, anti-Semitic party that had considerable influence outside of the professional and business classes because of its close ties with the Polish Catholic Church (Seton-Watson, 1951:24, 43). The Church itself was permeated with Polish nationalism and showed no significant sympathy for the Jews (Horak, 1961:119).

Poland, along with Hungary and Romania, was one of the three countries of Eastern Europe with strong, authentically fascist movements—the National Radical Camp, the Arrow Cross, and the Iron Guard, respectively (see Seton-Watson, 1951:44). Becoming a pow-

erful organization in 1934, and growing in strength over the next few years, the National Radical Camp called for a racist dictatorship modeled after that of Nazi Germany, advocating radical measures against Jews and Marxists. Polish fascism, even more than elsewhere in Europe, was based almost exclusively in the urban middle classes. The bulk of Polish fascists were students and young university graduates who suffered intensely from the declining number of professional jobs in the 1930s, and who found themselves in intense competition with self-employed Jews in the professions and retail business. In general, it was the urban middle class that was the most racist and nationalist (especially anti-Semitic and anti-Russian) (Seton-Watson, 1951:44).

Anti-Semitism—directed against the 3.5 million Jews who made up 10 percent of Poland's population, the largest concentration of Jews in the world—became ever more central to the strategy of maintaining landlord and bourgeois rule in the Polish state.\* The Jews were progressively pushed out of their traditional positions. They were largely excluded from employment in state-owned industries, such as tobacco and alcohol production. Special discriminatory regulations were adopted against Jewish craftsmen. It was made difficult for Jews to obtain import-export licenses and credit. Quotas were established for Jews in the universities, reducing the proportion of Jewish university students to the percentage of Jews in the Polish population. While in 1923/24, 24.9 percent of all university students were Jewish, by 1937/38 the figure had been reduced to 9.9 percent. The number of Jewish medical students declined from 1,469 in 1923 to 588 in 1936. "Ghetto benches," where all Jewish students were required to sit, were introduced in university classrooms. After 1930 Jews were not admitted to military academies. The state authorities, further, were involved in organizing pogroms against Jews (or just looked the other way). Jewish students were systematically beaten in the universities, and expelled for protesting. Demolitions of Jewish shops became common. In 1938 there were numerous, bloody anti-

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\*The basis of the extreme anti-Semitism of the Polish bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie was their competition with the heavy concentration of Jews in business, trade, and the professions at a time of economic stagnation. Almost half of the bourgeoisie in the 1920s were Jews, 70 percent of the petty bourgeoisie, and 40 percent of the craftsmen. Jews were 50 percent of professionals. Sixty percent of economically active Jews were self-employed. In cities of over 20,000 almost half the population was Jewish (see Matejko, 1974:60, 61).



Jewish riots. Persecution and systematic exclusion reduced the great mass of once prosperous Jews to poverty and massive unemployment. By the time of the German conquest, all the Gestapo had to do was turn on the gas (Horak, 1961:113-24).

The imperial Polish state's relationship to its Belorussian and Ukrainian colonies became increasingly repressive during the 1930s as nationalist (and in part pro-Soviet) sentiment among Belorussians and Ukrainians intensified. The Polish government attempted to suppress the use of the Ukrainian and Belorussian languages. Eighty percent of the Ukrainian-language elementary schools in the Polish Ukraine were closed between 1921 and 1937. The Orthodox Church was persecuted, with some churches being destroyed. There was systematic discrimination against Ukrainians and Belorussians in employment and pay. Thousands who refused to be converted to Roman Catholicism were deported to central Poland. Orthodox religious newspapers were closed down and the Orthodox clergy was ordered to preach in the Polish language. Between 1921 and 1938, 2,500 Ukrainian nationalists were sentenced for antistate activities, and the Belorussians experienced mass executions by the Polish army.

Needless to say, the Roman Catholic hierarchy, closely tied to the Polish ruling class and highly supportive of Polish nationalism, did not actively oppose these policies. Ten years of intensive national oppression left both major factions of the Ukrainian national movement—the pro-Communist Sel-Rob and the pro-independence nationalist OUN—stronger in 1939 than they had been in 1929. Both factions continued their fight against Polish domination and against the German occupiers as well, although the OUN at first had illusions about “German liberation” and protection from the Soviets. After the liberation of the western Ukraine by the Red Army in 1944, the OUN continued armed actions against the Soviet regime, while the left actively supported reunification with the Soviet Ukraine (Horak, 1961:142-74).

In 1919-35 Poland was aligned with Britain, France, and Romania, primarily in organizing a *cordon sanitaire* against the spread of Bolshevik or Russian influence into Central Europe. After the death of Pilsudski, the Polish regime began to flirt with Nazi Germany, coming to adopt a position between the British and French, and the German. In 1935 it refused to join a proposed alliance with France, Czechoslovakia, and the USSR against Nazi Germany. At the same time it intensified its hostility to the Soviet Union and Com-



munism. Its relations with the Germans became so close that in 1938 Poland participated in the partition of Czechoslovakia, receiving a small part of that country (Teschen). However, after Munich relations with Germany deteriorated as Hitler became increasingly insistent that Gdansk, predominantly a German city, and the "Polish Corridor," which separated the two parts of Germany in order to give Poland a Baltic Sea coast, be incorporated into Germany. After refusing those demands, ethnic Poland was invaded and conquered in six weeks by the Germans. After the Germans had destroyed the bulk of the Polish army, and as the Germans were on the verge of occupying all of Poland, the Soviet Army crossed the Polish frontier and occupied those parts of the Ukraine and Belorussia the USSR had been forced to cede to Poland after Pilsudski's invasion in 1920. The only part of ethnic Polish territory of any consequence occupied by the Red Army was the mixed Bialystok region adjacent to Lithuania, Belorussia, and East Prussia. In June 1941, with the Nazi invasion of the USSR, all of ethnic Poland passed under the rule of the Germans.

### The German Occupation, Resistance, and Liberation

The Nazis considered the Poles an inferior race (more or less equivalent to Africans) suited only for simple manual labor and incapable of developing culture. Their occupation policy was implemented according to their racial principles. In the words of the German governor-general, Hans Frank, "Poland shall be treated as a colony; the Poles shall be the slaves of the Greater German World Empire" (cited in Seton-Watson, 1951:75). The German design had Poland set to become an agricultural colony, with all its existing industrial plant moved to Germany.

The Germans closed all universities and secondary schools in Poland. Only primary and low-grade vocational schools were permitted. Governor-General Frank decreed, "The Poles should be given only such possibilities of education as will prove the hopelessness of their national existence. . . . No Pole can occupy a higher post than that of foreman, no Pole will be allowed to receive a higher education in State Schools" (cited in Douglas, 1962:26). In some areas even primary schools were closed for long periods of time. History, geography, and other humanistic subjects were forbidden. All children had to go to work at age 12. Middle-class Poles were displaced from the

better neighborhoods, allowed to take only what they could carry (they were replaced with Germans). Poles were excluded from most parks and cafes, with the best cars on trains and the seats on street-cars reserved exclusively for Germans.

The German "biological policy" in Poland was "to break down the biological strength of the Polish nation by all means leading to this end." Ninety percent of Polish Jews died in Gestapo gas chambers; the majority of Jewish survivors fled east through the Soviet Union or were evacuated by the Soviet Army during their retreat. Although significant numbers of Polish intellectuals and Marxists suffered the same fate as the Jews, the vast majority of the victims of the German genocide against Slavs were the victims of starvation, epidemics, undernourishment, overwork, overcrowding, destruction of sanitary facilities, mass eviction, unavailability of medical supplies, and mass executions that were reprisals against resistance actions. The middle class, both because it was totally unused to such brutal conditions and because it was singled out by the Nazis for annihilation, as proof that the Poles were incapable of producing culture, suffered exceptionally high mortality rates. Half of all Polish doctors and lawyers and 40 percent of all university professors were killed (Ascherson 1981:69).

A total of about 3.5 million were murdered outright in concentration camps (3.3 million Jews, 200,000 others). Over 1,250,000 died in prisons and concentration camps as a result of epidemics, starvation, and brutal treatment. At least a half million more died outside of camps from undernourishment, beatings, overwork, or retaliatory executions. Six hundred thousand died as a direct result of hostilities. A total of about 3.5 million Jews and 3 million other Poles were killed.

Buildings and monuments were systematically destroyed. Polish-language books were ground up and sent to paper mills. Entire libraries and archives were destroyed. Concert recordings and precious artifacts were smashed. The vast majority of Polish libraries, archives, scientific institutes, and museums were lost. About 75 percent of all scientific equipment and books from high schools were lost.

The urban economy was devastated. Two-thirds of all mining and industrial establishments were at least heavily damaged, and one-third of all industrial buildings totally destroyed, as were over half of all power installations and 80 percent of all transport equip-



ment. Forty-five percent of manufacturing equipment was destroyed. In 1946 industrial production was only 45 percent of that in 1937 (on the same territory). Warsaw was systematically destroyed, dynamited building by building, in retaliation for the uprising of 1944. The Germans engaged in a systematic scorched-earth policy as they retreated. In agriculture, 43 percent of all horses, 60 percent of all cattle, and 78 percent of all pigs were killed. Major damage was done to the fertility of the soil as well as to the forests. No country in the world suffered greater devastation in terms of the percentage of the population or the economy destroyed (see Douglas, 1972:22-33; Kolko and Kolko, 1972:176-77).

On the impending defeat of Poland in 1939, the leaders of the Polish military government, as well as of the various non-Communist parties, were evacuated to London, where they established a government in exile, the ruling generals of which included the leaders of the National Democrats (the urban, middle-class, anti-Semitic party), the right of the Social Democrats, the Peasant Party, and the Labor (Catholic) Party. The government in exile was headed by General Wladyslaw Sikorski, regarded as more acceptable than the semifascist and now discredited General Josef Beck (Seton-Watson, 1951:110-11). Couriers and radio kept the London exile government in command of the Home Army's underground resistance. Some of the right-wing nationalist Polish parties, including the anti-Semitic National Democrats and some smaller Polish fascist groups, organized their own military organization, which, together with some members of the Home Army, continued to fight the Red Army after it liberated Poland from the Germans (Kolko and Kolko, 1972:205).

The policy of the London government in exile's resistance army (the A.K.) was to use selective terror against Germans with especially bloody records against non-Jewish Poles (in order to deter the extremes of Nazi brutality). The A.K. and the exile government felt that large-scale sabotage and full-scale attacks on the occupying Germans would result in massive retaliation against Poles because of the German reprisal policy, and would help the Soviets more than the Poles (the German supply lines to the Eastern Front ran through Poland) (Bethell, 1969:47).

The London government in exile, although it was militantly anti-Communist and anti-Soviet, reluctantly signed a treaty of alliance with the Soviet government against the Germans in December



1941. In May 1943, however, it broke diplomatic relations with the USSR after the German radio accused the Soviets of killing 10,000 Polish officers during their evacuation of the Smolensk region in 1941.\* The Soviets as well as the Polish Communists, who had always regarded the military government in exile with suspicion because of its long record of conservatism and anti-Sovietism, accused the exiled Poles of undermining the common war effort—the precise intention of the German propaganda broadcast that accused the Soviets of a massacre. General Wladyslaw Sikorski, who was killed in an air crash in July 1943, was succeeded by a leadership even more anti-Communist and anti-Soviet.

In January 1942 a new Communist organization was established in occupied Poland: the Polish Workers' Party (PWP), created by a merger of two underground Marxist organizations that had become active during the previous year. The new organization was led by former leaders of the old PCWP. The PWP established an armed

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\*This incident (the "Katyn massacre") and the Polish exile government's response to it have generated considerable controversy and bad feelings (on both sides) to this day. The "Katyn massacre" issue was resurrected by anti-Soviet forces in Poland during 1980 and 1981. The facts of the case, however, are still not clear. The Soviets immediately charged the Germans with killing the Polish officers after they captured the Soviet prisoner of war camp in the summer of 1941 (a position the Soviets have continued to maintain). Circumstantial evidence can be used to support both versions. On the one hand, the massacre of Slavic officers and other intellectuals was common German practice during the war. There has been no other serious claim that the Soviets killed any other group of prisoners of war from countries invaded by the Germans. Finally, large numbers of Polish soldiers and the bulk of Polish officers captured by the Russians in 1939 were protected by the Soviets and encouraged to form a Polish army in Russia after the June 1941 invasion (which they did). The bulk of the captured Polish officers, however, shortly after reconstituting a Polish army in Russia (under General Anders), asked to be evacuated through Iran to fight on the Western Front, which was immediately facilitated by the Soviets. On the other hand, since most Polish officers were released from internment in August 1941, and encouraged to form an anti-German army, the question can be asked why those interned at Katyn were not released along with the others, instead being allowed to be captured by the Germans. It is quite possible, as rumors on the left had it at the time, that there was an uprising at the Katyn internment center to which the Soviets responded by the execution of the participating Polish officers. It should also be noted that a number of Polish officers stayed on to fight in the Soviet Union (together with a much larger number of ordinary Polish refugees) in a Polish army under the command of General Zygmunt Berling. The Polish post-war army was in fact created around this Eastern Front army (see Kolko, 1968:104-06; Fleming, 1961:228-30).

branch—the People's Guard—to fight the Germans. It began circulating two clandestine newspapers, one for the cities and one for the peasantry, both emphasizing national liberation, patriotism, and social transformation. The People's Guard attempted to coordinate its action with the Polish Home Army (which accepted leadership from the Polish government in exile in London) but was rebuffed on the grounds that the PWP did not recognize the pre-1939 Polish-Russian border and was not willing to subordinate itself unconditionally to the London exile government (Dziewanowski, 1976:162–64).

In contrast with most the rest of occupied Europe, the bulk of the resistance was not led by the Communists but, rather, by the Home Army (A.K.). The failure of the Polish Communists to lead the resistance was, in good part, a result of the disarray of the Communist movement in Poland. The Party was mistakenly dissolved in 1938, ceasing to function in any organized way until 1942. The international Communist movement's 1939–41 policy of treating Nazi Germany and the Western capitalist countries as equivalent, as well as the Soviets' practice of going out of their way not to antagonize the Germans so as not to provoke them into attacking the USSR, did not generate support for the Communists. Further, there were bad feelings about what many Poles regarded as the Soviet "invasion"—rather than "liberation," or defensive preemption from German occupation—of Polish Belorussia and the Ukraine. Part of the failure of the Party to lead the resistance was also due to the Nazis' policy of oppressing the Polish middle classes, rather than encouraging collaboration, as they did in most of the rest of Europe (with the consequence of driving them into armed resistance).

In March 1943 the reestablished Polish Communist Party issued its first program. In the tradition of the Popular Front of the 1930s and according to the current line of the international Communist movement, it called for broad democratic reforms and not for socialist revolution; for the nationalization of large enterprises and estates, but not for the expropriation of small capitalists or of land units smaller than 50 hectares; and for free health care and education (Bethell, 1969:62).

In October 1943 a number of leftist non-Communist parties established the Supreme People's Committee (NKL), which declared itself independent of the London government in exile (this coalition included the left wing of the Polish Social Democratic Party) and established its own partisan units independent of both the A.K. and



the Communist-led resistance. In December 1943 the National Council of Poland, backed by the Communist Party and some left-wing Social Democrats and members of the Peasant Party, was formed as the representative body of the workers' committees, factory councils, and national committees that were springing up around the country. Although there had been prolonged negotiations among the Communists, the Supreme People's Committee, and the Peasant Party, neither of the latter groups at first endorsed the National Council, which in its manifesto declared that it was "the only democratic representation of the Polish nation and its sole spokesman." It pledged itself to extensive social reforms and to the reimplementation of the progressive 1921 Constitution (Dziewanowski, 1976:171-72). In May 1944 the bulk of the left Social Democrats and a left segment of the Peasant Party joined the National Council, merging their armed units with those of the People's Army. These defections were soon followed by others, including most of the NKL (Dziewanowski, 1976:173; Seton-Watson, 1951:114-15). After the first major ethnically Polish city, Lublin, was liberated by the Red Army in July 1944, the National Council was recognized by the Soviet Army as the legal government and began to exercise sovereignty in the liberated areas.

On December 13, 1944, the first anniversary of its formation, and on the verge of the Red Army's liberation of Warsaw, the National Council proclaimed itself the provisional government of Poland. The provisional government was composed of seven Communists, three Social Democrats, three members of the Peasant Party, and three members of the National Democratic Party. On January 5, 1945, the USSR officially recognized this body as the legitimate government of Poland (Dziewanowski, 1976:184). At the Yalta Conference in February 1945, the major allies agreed that if the new provisional government in Poland was "reorganized on a broader democratic basis," it would be recognized by the United States and the United Kingdom. This agreement greatly strengthened the provisional government's internal and external position, while decertifying the London government in exile as a legitimate force (Dziewanowski, 1976:184-85).

In June 1945 the provisional government was reorganized to incorporate a broader range of social groups, including the leaders of the Peasant Party who had spent the war in London (the most prominent of whom was Adam Mikolajczyk), as well as exile leaders of the Social Democrats, National Democrats, and the small Labor Party.



Of the 21 government ministries the Peasant Party received seven (split between leftists who had spent the war in Poland and centrists like Mikolajczyk who had been part of the London government) and the PWP five, including the police and military. Of the 21 ministers, 16 were old members of the provisional government and 5 were former members of the London government in exile. The London government in exile was deserted by the three non-Communist mass parties. Retaining its base only among the most right-wing and anti-Semitic forces abroad and at home, it was reduced to a virtually irrelevant rump. Immediately after the reconstitution of the provisional government, the United States and the United Kingdom officially recognized the new government as the legitimate government of Poland (Dziewanowski, 1976:186, Kolko, 1968:401-02).

When the Soviet Army crossed the borders of 1939 Poland on January 4, 1944, the London Poles ordered the Polish Home Army neither to fight nor to cooperate with the Soviets. On August 1, 1944, as the Soviet Army completed an offensive that carried it to the Vistula River, the London exiles ordered the Home Army to revolt against the Germans in Warsaw, so as to liberate the city in advance of the Soviets. But the Germans decided to defend the Vistula and to put down the uprising rather than retreat. The Soviets, their supply lines overextended as a result of their protracted offensive, probed the German lines across the river, but were repulsed. Although the PWP actively participated in the armed revolt, Polish brigades of the Red Army accompanied by Soviet troops crossed the river (suffering casualties of up to 70 percent), and the Red Army provided about 50 tons of supplies by air, the Soviets were skeptical about the anti-Soviet Home Army's rebellion, seeing it as an attempt to install a rightist, anti-Communist, anti-Soviet regime in the Polish capital (Kolko, 1968:115-19). The rebellion was brutally put down by the Germans. It was not until January 1945 that the Red Army was finally able to capture Warsaw. Although virtually all nonpartisan military experts agree that it would have been very difficult and exceedingly costly for the Russians to attempt to take Warsaw in a frontal attack in August 1944 (their normal strategy was to encircle cities), the "failure of the Soviet Army to aid the Home Army's uprising" is another long-standing issue raised by anti-Soviet nationalists in Poland.

The Polish Home Army continued to function after liberation, taking orders from the increasingly rightist and anti-Communist rump London Poles, and fighting against the new regime. In October

1945 the government declared an amnesty for the rank and file of the Home Army. Most Home Army officers ordered their members to cease resisting the government and accept the amnesty. About 200,000 supporters of the Home Army did so. Some smaller rightist groups continued to engage in acts of terrorism, refused to accept the amnesty, and, in spite of the withering away of their popular base, focused on assassinating members of the Soviet Army and Jews (Dziewanowski, 1976:194). The government stepped up its campaign against the increasingly right-wing guerrillas and succeeded in suppressing them by the end of 1946—at the cost of 15,000 dead.



## Socialism in Poland

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#### ~~Socialist Revolution in Poland~~

Not surprisingly, given the devastation wrought by the Nazis and the preceding decade and a half of military dictatorship, the Red Army's liberation of Poland in 1944 and 1945 was enthusiastically welcomed, especially by the working class. In most cases Polish factories had been managed during the occupation by Germans who were evacuated with the retreating German Army. As the German Army left, the workers generally continued on their own, forming workers' councils and electing their own supervisors. As was the case throughout almost all of occupied Europe, a spontaneous socialist transformation of the economy took place, with workers taking over production. The principal difference between Eastern and Western Europe in this regard was that the Red Army did not restore the factories to private ownership, instead (at least at first) allowing the workers to carry on (Reynolds, 1978:519).

The National Council of Poland was established under the leadership of the PWP as the nationwide representation of the workers' councils. Before October 1944, Communist Party policy, however, was the eventual restoration of most factories to private ownership in order to create a broad "democratic front" of antifascist forces that would carry through basic "democratic" (not yet Socialist) reforms. In the fall of 1944, the Socialists pressed the National Council for more active support of the workers' council movement. In October 1944 the National Council reversed its declared policy of eventually

turning factories back to private capital, instead endorsing permanent workers' control of industry. And, shortly thereafter, it endorsed and began to implement a policy of radical land reform (Reynolds, 1978:520). Abandoning their broad popular front strategy, which had been designed to win over progressive small and medium capitalists, the Communists adopted an aggressive strategy designed to win over the spontaneously politicized workers and peasants, who were seizing the factories and land on their own.

The Polish Social Democratic Party on May Day 1940, nine months after the German conquest of Poland, had issued a proclamation denouncing the old ruling classes of Poland as bankrupt and declaring that the future of Poland belonged to the workers and peasants. It urged that the future government of Poland should take over most industrial establishments and that the land ought to be distributed to individual peasant families. The bulk of its leadership, however, collaborated with the London government in exile through the beginning of 1944, when massive defection to the Communist-led National Council of Poland began (Seton-Watson, 1951:112-13). Like similar parties in much of the rest of Europe at the same time, such as the Italian and Czech Social Democrats, it once again affirmed Marxist principles. It called for the radical transformation of society, dropped its traditional anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism, and allied itself to the Communists in order to ensure broad working-class unity in the effort to achieve fundamental social transformation (see Reynolds, 1978:517).

In September 1945 the Peasants' Party split, with Mikolajczyk establishing a new Polish Peasants' Party (which took the majority) and a pro-Communist-oriented Peasants' Party (the minority) (Dziewanowski, 1976:190). Mikolajczyk's Polish Peasants' Party favored not only radical land reform—land to be given to individual peasant families—but also the expropriation without compensation of all enterprises employing more than 100 workers per shift, as well as the nationalization with compensation of medium capital (Dziewanowski, 1976:199). In 1944-47 virtually everyone in Poland supported socialism.

Both peasant parties participated in the provisional government through January 1947. However, anti-Communist forces in Poland began grouping around Mikolajczyk and his Polish Peasants' Party, while revolutionary forces grouped around the Socialist-Communist alliance. It was generally thought at the time, by the left as well as by almost all observers, that the substantial majority of peasants would



have voted for Mikolajczyk in a parliamentary election held in 1946, and that although the Communist-Socialist alliance would have swept the working-class towns and cities, Poland's being over 60 percent peasant (and only about 20 percent workers) would mean Mikolajczyk's Polish Peasants' Party would win and, together with other anti-Marxist forces, form the government. Nevertheless, the Communist-Socialist coalition had considerable support and popular respect for the measures it was undertaking in both the cities and the countryside (Kolko and Kolko, 1972:207).

After liberation both the radicalized Socialist Party and the Communists were snowballing in membership. Between July 1944 and January 1945, the Polish Workers' Party grew in membership from 20,000 to 69,000. By December 1945 it had 235,000, and by December 1946, 556,000 members. In December 1945, 61 percent of the Party's members were workers. Meanwhile, Socialist Party membership grew from 8,000 in December 1944 to 194,000 in December 1945 and 283,000 in December 1946 (Reynolds, 1978:539).

In May 1945 the Communists again reversed their policy, once more affirming their commitment to the principles of the Popular Front with all left and center antifascist forces committed to national reconstruction and social reform (they aimed especially at building an alliance with Mikolajczyk's Polish Peasants' Party). The radicalism of the preceding months was criticized and the party once again affirmed the need for a rapid return to private ownership of most industry (but not the return of the land to landlords). The Communists, having to deal with serious productivity problems in the worker-controlled factories, grew increasingly concerned about a quick restoration of production.

Poland, devastated by the war, was starving. Real earnings in the first half of 1945 were only 10 percent of their 1938 level. In April industrial production stood at only 19 percent of the 1937 level (Reynolds, 1978:520-22). The need for quick expansion of production was compelling. Popular dissatisfaction with material hardship was in some places being taken advantage of by the remnants of the armed anti-Communist underground. Specialists in the factories were complaining that their advice was not heeded by the workers' councils and that they were cut out of profit-sharing plans and denied their share of material incentives.

The Communists began to emphasize efficiency in production. The powers of the factory councils were reduced and the role of factory directors, engineers, and foremen strengthened. The govern-

ment decreed that the administration and workers' councils together should decide matters of employment, as well as the material and cultural affairs of the workers, and that "the director alone decides all matters related to the economic and technical management of the enterprises, as well as matters relating to bonuses" (Reynolds, 1978:522). Rejecting egalitarianism in pay, the National Council decided to link wages to both productivity and skill levels, with a share of profits going to the nonmanual employees as well as to the manual workers. These changes fundamentally undermined the autonomy of the workers' councils, placing the locus of enterprise management in the leading factory administrators and the economic ministries that supervised and coordinated them. In response to the reorganization of factory management, production rose very rapidly in the last half of 1945 and throughout 1946. By the end of the year, production had reached 1939 levels and real wages had risen considerably. Economic normalcy had been restored, and the government was emphasizing the production of consumer goods (Reynolds, 1978:522-25).

Immediately after liberation the Polish Workers' Party was unquestionably the strongest working-class party, a reversal of the pre-1939 situation with the Socialists. The prestige of the liberating Red Army and the Communists' leading role in the National Council of Poland had produced considerable popular support for the Party. This was revealed in its triumphs over the Socialists in union and workers' council elections, as well as in its more rapid gain in membership. In December 1945 the Polish Workers' Party had about 145,000 working-class members, compared with about 115,000 for the Socialists. In December 1946 the Communists had about 360,000, compared with about 170,000 for the Socialists; a year later the Communists had 475,000 workers and the Socialists about 450,000. Together the two allied Marxist parties had the overwhelming support of the Polish working class (Reynolds, 1978:539).

After the Communists reversed their policy on the autonomy of the workers' councils in May 1945, a difference emerged with their Socialist ally. The PSP, while admitting that there were efficiency problems with the early arrangements, argued for both greater autonomy for the workers' councils and for the permanent nationalization of enterprises—that is, no return of industries to private owners. As a result of this policy, the Socialists began gaining working-class support in both union and council elections (as well as in membership) at the expense of the Communists (Reynolds, 1978:523-25). In



January 1947 the weakened workers' councils were merged into the trade unions and assigned additional responsibilities for raising productivity, a measure supported by both the Socialist and Communist parties.

One of the regime's very first actions was to implement a radical land reform, turning all estate land over to peasant families. The regime distributed 10 million acres to about 1.5 million landless and virtually landless peasants. The state kept about 5 million acres, mostly for state farms. This reform neutralized political opposition to the regime among the peasantry and won the government considerable support in rural areas (Dziewanowski, 1976:197-98; Kolko, 1968:391). Landlords were allowed to keep enough land to work themselves (they usually chose to keep the best section, on which the manor house was located), and the Catholic Church's estates were exempted altogether, so as not to antagonize the strongly Catholic peasantry (Kolko, 1968:391).

The nationalization of large and medium industrial enterprises was as popular as the land reform and was supported by all the major parties, including the Polish Peasants' Party, as well as by the bulk of the bitterly anti-Russian/anti-Semitic underground (see Kolko, 1968:392; Dziewanowski, 1976: 198, 279). The old wealthy bourgeoisie and aristocracy had been discredited by their leadership of the interwar state and then decimated during the Nazi occupation. There was no popular support for a return to the old economic system. Thoroughgoing socialism was in the air and had, in fact, been spontaneously put in place by the workers immediately upon liberation. In a popular referendum held in April 1946, 77 percent of the population declared they were in favor of the recent economic reforms (Dziewanowski, 1976:196).

After a period of protracted national debate and negotiation among the coalition parties, the Nationalization Law was implemented on January 3, 1946. The state took over without compensation all enterprises employing more than 50 workers. The law was, in good part, drafted by the Socialist Party, which pressed the hardest during May 1945-December 1946 for thorough nationalization. The Communists, committed to their Popular Front policy of alliance with "progressive" national capital, were reluctant to undertake such a radical measure. Meanwhile, the Polish Peasants' Party was inclined to restrict nationalization to only the larger and mostly foreign-owned enterprises (employing more than 100 workers per

shift). As a result of the Nationalization Law, 80 percent of workers came to be employed in nationalized enterprises. The socialist sector (state and cooperative industries) was responsible for 94 percent of all industrial production in 1948—a thorough redistribution of wealth and economic power had been completed (see Dziewanowski, 1976:200).

The Polish Communists, following the Popular Front logic of the international Communist movement, which was heavily emphasized from 1941 to 1947, made every effort (as did the USSR) to build as broad a left-center coalition as possible. Coalition governments involving the Communists, Social Democrats, Peasants' and middle-class moderate parties were the rule throughout most of Europe—France, Italy, Finland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary—as well as Poland. Even officers from the old army were allowed into the new army unless they were clearly rightists.

Boleslaw Bierut, the head of the new coalition government, declared, "We are ready to include in the new government the widest circles of opposition which fully share the decisions of the Crimea [Yalta] Conference" (see Kolko, 1968:342, 402). Through 1947 all left and center parties, as well as the Catholic Church, functioned with a high degree of freedom (Kolko, 1968:391).

The old rightist anti-Semitic parties were dissolved, leaving their supporters no choice but to go into the more conservative of the legal parties (Mikolajczyk's Polish Peasants' Party) or to support the armed struggle against the government led by the Polish fascist groups. Anti-government propaganda at the time stressed anti-Semitism and opposition to the Soviets, accusing Jews of trying to impose "Russian Communism" on Poland (Kolko and Kolko, 1972:206). By the end of 1946 most of the armed resistance to the new government had been eliminated, as much by the withering away of its support in the face of the radical improvement in conditions as by its suppression. In February 1947 a second general amnesty was offered to all supporters of the right-wing terrorists groups, and almost 100,000 took advantage of the offer. However, once their armed struggle ceased, rightist activists rallied behind Mikolajczyk's Polish Peasants' Party, giving it, in spite of its generally progressive but anti-Communist politics, a public identification with the traditional Polish right (Kolko and Kolko, 1972:207).

Mikolajczyk was confident that he would win a formal parliamentary election in Poland and that the United States and Great



Britain would support his election. After the electoral victory of the Smallholders' (Peasant) Party in the 1946 Hungarian elections, which all observers agree were fully fair, he came to feel that the Soviets and the Polish Workers' Party would allow his party to triumph in the elections scheduled for late 1946. Instead, the Polish Workers' Party offered his Polish Peasants' Party 20 percent of the places on a common "Democratic Front" election ticket. Mikolajczyk, while agreeing to be part of the Democratic Front, held out for 75 percent. The Polish elections were postponed until January 1947<sup>Why</sup> (Kolko and Kolko, 1972:206).

Failing to reach an agreement with the Communist-Socialist alliance, Mikolajczyk's Polish Peasants' Party ran a list separate from that of the Democratic Front, in a clear showdown with the left. The Democratic Front was favored by the Electoral Law of September 1946, which disqualified about 1 million persons (about 8 percent of the electorate) from voting on the grounds of collaboration with the Germans or support of the fascist underground organizations, as well as by the fact that the elections were held (probably purposely) in the middle of January, when the rural roads were covered with snow and peasants scattered over the remote areas of the countryside found it more difficult than town dwellers to get to the polls. Beyond disqualifying much of the hard-core right and setting the time of the election to minimize peasant participation, the government engaged in a number of other measures to ensure the overwhelming defeat of Mikolajczyk's party, including disqualifying Peasants' Party lists in 10 of the 52 districts as being composed of rightists and almost certainly falsifying results in some areas where Peasants' Party observers were denied the right to oversee the balloting process. The announced returns gave Mikolajczyk's party only 10.3 percent of the vote (and 28 out of 444 seats in the Sejm), compared with 80.1 percent of the vote for the Democratic Front (Dziewanowski, 1976:42).

Mikolajczyk's increasing identification with the traditional right that was rallying around him during the election campaign caused many progressives in his party to break with him and support the government list. Although the Polish bishops instructed all Catholics to vote against "atheistic" Communism (de facto for Mikolajczyk), many peasants voted for the Democratic Front on the pro-government Peasants' Party/New Liberation ticket (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:38-39; Kolko and Kolko, 1972:207). It is not at all clear that given a completely open contest, Mikolajczyk would

have replicated the success of the Hungarian Peasants' Party and won a majority of the vote. One Communist leader admitted, "Had we known before the January election by what a large margin we would win, we would not have engaged in those pressures and minor dishonesties which did take place in many localities" (cited in Kolko and Kolko, 1972:207). In any event there was a challenge to the claim that it was a fair election, such as had occurred in Hungary and Czechoslovakia in 1946. Mikolajczyk charged fraud and "Communist takeover."

During 1947 the economy ran into difficulties caused by crop failure, the delay in credits promised from the West (as a result of the intensification of the cold war), and problems in realizing planned output in the vital coal industry. As a result real wages dropped 10-15 percent during 1947 (Reynolds, 1978:527-70). Both the Socialist and the Communist parties, seeing the compelling need to increase production, endorsed the economic centralization program. But minor differences between the Socialists and Communists began to emerge over the degree and pace of nationalization (the Socialists pushing for more), the pace of industrialization (the Communists pushing for a more rapid pace), the role of workers' councils and co-operatives (the Socialists being more supportive), and the balance between consumption and investment (the Communists emphasizing more investment, the Socialists more consumption). Differences also began to emerge on questions of formal civil rights and the powers of the Sejm (the Parliament), with the Socialists beginning to be somewhat critical of the political role of the Communists (Reynolds, 1978:526).

During 1947 the Socialists were tending to surpass the Communists in working-class support, gaining roughly twice as many working-class members as did the Communists: approximately 250,000 workers, compared with about 120,000 for the Communists (Reynolds, 1978:539). This shift was also reflected in union elections. In the winter of 1946-47 union elections in Warsaw saw the Socialists increase their share of the vote, on the average, from 30 percent to 43 percent of the total, while that of Communist candidates declined from 52 percent to 41 percent (Reynolds, 1978:527). The new Sejm was convened in February 1947. Boleslaw Bierut, of the Communist Party, was elected president, while Jozef Cyrankiewicz, of the Socialist Party, was appointed prime minister.

Immediately after the elections a number of Polish Peasants' Party leaders were arrested for counterrevolutionary activities and



many of its local offices were closed. In November, Mikolajczyk and a few of his close associates left the country to take up residence in the West, where they began a violently anti-Communist campaign against the Polish government (Dziewanowski, 1976:206). After Mikolajczyk's flight the left, with support from the government, became dominant within the remnants of the Polish Peasants' Party. In 1949 it merged with the Peasants' Party (which had long been pro-government) to create the United Peasants' Party, which, along with the Democratic Party, was given a permanent role by the Polish Constitution, including guaranteed seats in the Sejm. Although officially designed to represent the interests of the peasantry and urban petty bourgeoisie, respectively, in the period before 1956 these two parties came in good part to function to persuade these classes of the wisdom of the Polish United Workers' Party's policies (see Dziewanowski, 1976:222).

It should be noted that the Communists had considerable support among the peasants, especially the landless, small, and medium peasants, among whom they in fact had some deep roots. In 1948 there were about 225,000 peasant members in the Party (22 percent of its total members). This figure had, however, slipped to 175,000 by 1955 (see Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:table 4; Reynolds, 1978:539).

In November 1946 a close working relationship was established between the Communists and the Socialists. An agreement was signed, and simultaneously published in the presses of both parties, that included pledges to endow their members with a spirit of working-class unity and forge a conviction in them of the importance of a united front, combat anti-Soviet tendencies as well as the activities of right-wing Social Democrats, and actively undermine the Polish Peasants' Party of Mikolajczyk, because his party had become "a legal superstructure of reactionary resistance." The two Marxist parties pledged to work for the conversion of "true democrats from the Polish Peasants' Party" (Dziewanowski, 1976:216).

The left wing of the Socialists, which had supported merger with the Communists into a single working-class party for some time, increased its efforts to realize that goal. The Communists, who until then had been reluctant to merge their more disciplined organization into the more loosely organized and diverse Socialist organization, as well as to lose the advantages of a united front that the two parties' alliance provided, became receptive to the idea. On May Day 1947, Wladyslaw Gomulka, the head of the Polish Workers'

Party, finally issued a call for the amalgamation of the two parties (Dziewanowski, 1976:216). The majority of the Socialist Party leadership opposed the idea of merger until late July 1947, when it reversed itself. Over the next year negotiations, joint meetings, and protracted discussions occurred, as well as expulsions of some opponents of the merger. The two parties were finally amalgamated into a single organization, the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP), in December 1948 at a unification congress attended by 1,013 delegates from the Polish Workers' Party and 526 from the Socialists. The Political Bureau that was elected at this congress consisted of eight former members of the Workers' Party, and three from the Socialists. Bierut, from the Workers' Party, became chairman of the Central Committee, while Cyrankiewicz, of the Socialist Party, was secretary-general (Dziewanowski, 1976:218).

The international crisis of 1947-48 (the beginning of the cold war) led to almost paranoid fears on the part of the new regimes in Eastern Europe that a U.S.-sponsored invasion to restore the status quo ante, probably using the new U.S. atomic weapon, was imminent. The international situation produced a hothouse atmosphere that resulted in rapid and forced changes in the policy and practices of the Polish Communists. This was manifested in a major leftward shift in line, the tightening up of Polish society (the temporary elimination of overt opposition), and a focus on rapid industrialization.

For Poland the beginning of the cold war with the United States occurred in September 1946, when the United States revoked its earlier agreement to Poland's new western frontier on the Oder-Neisse River, which had been agreed to by the major powers at Teheran in 1943. In his September speech at Stuttgart, U.S. Secretary of State James Byrnes, apparently in an attempt to alienate German public opinion from the Soviet Union, stated that the question of how much territory Germany would have to cede Poland was open. This speech sent shock waves through Poland, strongly undermining popular support for pro-Western forces and at the same time making Soviet support all the more crucial—in fact, the Byrnes speech seriously weakened, if it did not cripple, Mikolajczyk and his pro-Western Peasants' Party. The fear of German revanchism with U.S. backing as a major support for the Polish Communist-Socialist alliance (which was backed by the USSR) became a major factor in the rapid transformation of Polish society in 1947-48, and continued to be a major factor in Polish politics for quite some time.



Wladyslaw Gomulka, who represented the 1945–48 politics of going slow, not alienating the peasantry, and a distinctive “Polish road to socialism,” was replaced in 1948 by Boleslaw Bierut as the Party’s leader. Bierut, unlike Gomulka, had been a leader of the pre-war Polish Party and had worked in the Comintern office in Prague in the 1930s; he had also been imprisoned at the anti-Red concentration camp of Rawicz by the Polish colonels. Having escaped from the German invasion to the Soviet Union, he returned to join the Communist resistance in the summer of 1943. Bierut represented the hard line of rapid revolution and industrialization, which Poland followed until 1956 (see Bethell, 1969: ch. 9).

The largely young (worker and intellectual) Party members and supporters were for the first time given rein. The young idealists had been chafing at the restraints and compromises of the previous four years. The transformation of Polish society now proceeded apace, with large-scale demotions of middle-class liberals and their replacement by workers and those with Marxist politics.

With the consolidation of Socialist institutions and the guiding role of the newly formed Polish United Workers’ Party in 1948, primary emphasis was given to rapid industrialization and the development of basic social services and popular education. State and economic institutions were reorganized and largely (until 1956) modeled after those in the Soviet Union. In an effort to cope with lagging production, the Communist Party introduced the Soviet system of Stakhanovites, providing great moral and material incentives for, as well as the great public celebration of, workers who far exceeded production norms. This campaign, combined with other pressures on workers to increase production, generated considerable resentment in the working class. Many Socialists criticized these measures, arguing that the Stakhanovite movement sapped the physical strength of workers. In some places local Socialist Party leaders actually led strikers against the new measures (Reynolds, 1978: 527–28).

An especially high level of hostility to the Stakhanovite program was expressed in the Lodz textile district, where workers voiced their concern that such measures were not effective, in the long run, in increasing productivity. Further, they wanted assurances that increased output would bring increased pay and that they would be protected against layoffs and continuing increases in work norms. Unhappy with Party answers to these concerns, approximately

40,000 workers in about 8 mills spontaneously struck in mid-September 1947. In response the government agreed to reduce pressure on workers to raise production and increased available consumer goods, thus establishing the pattern that has occurred in 1956, 1970, 1976, and 1980 (see Reynolds, 1978:532–34). But economic conditions improved considerably after 1948, with real wages up by almost 40 percent. Discontent, for the time being, was largely diffused. Party committees became the most important force within enterprises, and the Stakhanovite program was again intensified.

### Poland 1955–76

In 1954–56 a number of factors converged to determine a major change in Party policy in Poland—factors that were, in good degree, common to most of the Eastern European Socialist countries. Much of the almost messianic enthusiasm of the immediate revolutionary and reconstruction periods—worn down after many years of routine hard work, the fading of the memories of the oppression of the pre-war and war periods, and the gradual taking for granted of the new socialist institutions—had withered away, both among Party cadres and among the masses of the working class. People became less willing to sacrifice for the sake of rapid industrialization. The demand for higher living standards and less intense production grew. At the same time the international crisis was mitigated with the establishment of *détente* between the United States and the Socialist camp. For example, in 1955 Austria was neutralized, both the United States and the Soviet armies withdrawing from the country. Political changes in the Soviet Union, which were manifested in a loosening of the tight controls of the cold war period and culminated in Nikita Khrushchev's 1956 speech attacking Stalin, reverberated in the Polish intelligentsia, desirous of being released from tight Party controls. In the spring of 1954 a lively debate began in the Polish literary press about socialist realism. This discussion soon expanded to include almost all aspects of Marxist theory. The intellectuals began to express themselves as a class (Dziewanowski, 1976:260–62).

In the spring of 1956, 1,000 political prisoners were amnestied and a number of high-ranking army officers who had been condemned in 1951 for allegedly plotting against the regime were rehabilitated. The Ministry of Public Security was dissolved for having



abused its authority in December 1954, and a number of its high officials were put on trial. The Sejm ceased to vote unanimously and began to play an increasingly active role in the national decision-making process. The press, including party organs, began carrying debates about many fundamental aspects of Polish society (see Dziewanowski, 1976:257-59).

The new Five-Year Plan, which was launched in January 1956, responded to increased popular pressure to raise consumption by allocating significantly more funds for the production of light industrial consumption goods, for agriculture, and for housing. In 1955, 64 percent of productive investment had been allocated to capital goods, whereas in the new Five-Year Plan this figure was reduced to 50 percent (Dziewanowski, 1976:264).

In the spring of 1956 a spontaneous strike broke out among industrial workers at the Stalin Locomotive Works in Poznan, as a protest against the irregularity of supplies of raw materials, and the consequent cuts in wages that resulted from long periods of idleness, as well as against incorrect application of the wage regulations and excessive payroll taxes. The workers sent a delegation to Warsaw for redress of their grievances, but without a satisfactory result. On June 28, 1956, the workers organized a protest demonstration that was joined by thousands of others, especially young people. The issues were quickly expanded to include the shortage of consumer goods and poor housing. When the demonstration reached the center of the city, shots were exchanged between the police and the crowd (it is not clear who started the shooting). Soon the demonstration turned into a riot, with the demonstrators invading several public buildings, including the headquarters of the provincial Party Committee, the arsenal, and the army barracks. Some in the crowd seized weapons from the latter two buildings and began fighting with the police and army. By the end of the next day, 53 persons had been killed and about 300 wounded (Dziewanowski, 1976:265).

Throughout the summer and early fall of 1956 there were other workers' demonstrations against high production norms and strict labor discipline, as well as for improvements in the availability of consumption goods. One Silesian miner expressed the workers' mood to a Western journalist stating, "We are tired of working for the next generation" (Dziewanowski, 1976:270). Workers' committees (workers' councils) were spontaneously set up in many factories to express workers' concerns. However, the mood of dissatisfaction

among Polish workers in the summer of 1956 was neither an expression of discontent with socialism nor with the basic institutions of the new Poland, but with the policies of rapid industrialization.

These events caused a fundamental crisis in Polish society. How was it that workers could fight against a workers' state? Although at first the Party and press blamed "provocateurs" and "imperialist agents," discussion soon came to focus on the grievances of the workers (Dziewanowski, 1976:265-66). The next month a special plenum of the Central Committee of the Polish Party was called to deal with the crisis. The head of the Polish Party, Edward Ochab, spoke of the "immense wrongs" experienced by the working class, blaming the necessity for heavy investment on both the Western imperialists, who had imposed a heavy burden on the Socialist countries to industrialize rapidly in order to defend themselves, and on "bureaucracy and the soullessness of the authorities." The final resolution of the plenum stated, in part, that "the link with the masses was broken" through "economic neglect" and the "abandonment of the inner party democracy." The resolution vowed that the Party would work more closely among the masses and pay more attention to their sentiments and needs, as well as reshape economic planning to expand the output of consumption goods. The minimum wage was raised and delivery quotas for the peasantry were reduced (Dziewanowski, 1976:268-69).

In August the Central Council of the Trade Unions met and admitted that the unions had failed in their primary task of defending the interests of the workers, instead putting too much emphasis on increasing production. Its resolution stressed both the independence of the unions and "the need for strict observance . . . of democracy within the trade unions in the election of new officers and for fully respecting the will of the broad masses" (Dziewanowski, 1976:270).

During the summer the Party became polarized between the more orthodox (the "Natolin faction," which advocated stern measures against public manifestations opposed to the government, and only minor changes in state policies) and the liberals (led by former members of the Socialist Party, who argued for fundamental changes, or "liberalization"). In October, at the Eighth Plenum of the Central Committee, the liberals won a decisive victory, electing Gomulka as the head of the Party. Gomulka, who in 1948 had been purged from the top Party leadership for "nationalist errors," and had been living in exile in Yugoslavia, had become extremely popular



throughout Poland. Although he praised the basic achievements of the Six-Year Plan, he harshly criticized its neglect of consumer goods and agriculture, and also criticized the Seventh Plenum of the Central Committee, which had met in July, for failing to purge those responsible for the policies that had led to popular discontent.

Gomulka promised to establish workers' councils with authority to run the factories, to end the campaign to collectivize agriculture, to expand material incentives, and to greatly reduce the role of central planning, with the central state's role limited to general direction of the economy. His program, for the most part modeled after Tito's, was most strongly backed by the United Workers' Party leaders who were formerly the leaders of the Socialist Party, and regarded skeptically by both the Soviet Union and those who looked to the Soviet model of Socialist transition\* (see Dziewanowski, 1976:274-78). On October 21, 1956, the Central Committee endorsed the new "Polish road to socialism."

During the first two months of Gomulka's leadership, 80 percent of the collective farms were disbanded. The rural machine stations were instructed to sell off their equipment to farmers and disband, compulsory grain deliveries were reduced by one-third, and credit became more available, even to the rich peasants (Dziewanowski, 1976:284-85). Experimental profit-sharing plans were implemented, with enterprises given more autonomy within the central plan. Greater pay differentials were instituted in favor of the technical intelligentsia, and promotion policy came to favor technically educated experts (see Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:308). Labor discipline was loosened and increased emphasis was placed on consumption. The workers' councils that had been spontaneously created in the summer of 1956 were extended to most of industry and given considerable legal authority in running the enterprises. A delegation of Party members went to Yugoslavia to study workers' councils. Small businesses—craftsmen, tailors, shopkeepers, and such—were encouraged, instead of discouraged by high taxes and strict

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regulations. In a great many ways the new Gomulka program was a return to the policies followed during his earlier period of leadership (see Ascherson, 1981:78; Bethell, 1969:233-34).

Gomulka and his program were extremely popular in Poland. In the words of a leading Western analyst, "Gomulka, for a moment, had the entire nation behind him; the Party's chief, if not exactly the Party itself, led the nation with an authenticity that no other Communist attained before or since" (Ascherson, 1981:78). Enthusiasm for this new "Polish road to socialism" ran high, especially among the young (see Ascherson, 1981:68). Gomulka's support was especially strong in the new western territories reacquired from defeated Germany in 1945. (He had been the minister in charge of the resettlement of those areas immediately after the war.) These were also the regions in which Solidarity proved strongest in 1980-1981 (see Bethell, 1969:136).

Spartan in his Communism, Gomulka was widely respected for his honesty and integrity. In his second period as head of the Polish Party he lived first in a small apartment in *Saska Kępa* (on the "wrong side" of the *Vistula*), and then in a small block of flats in *Aleje na Skarpie*, near the *Sejm*. His wife regularly shopped for the family provisions alongside working-class women in the neighborhood stores. One story has it that when his son asked Gomulka for the use of an official car to take his wife to a clinic for the delivery of their child, Gomulka responded: "Official cars are not for private use" (Bethell, 1969:254-55).

The popularity of the Gomulka reforms was revealed in the January 1957 elections, the results of which Western observers regarded as being essentially a true reflection of the Polish electorate (within the parameters of the majority of candidates being *PUWP* members). In these elections, held at the peak of national enthusiasm for the Party's new course, 89.4 percent of the electorate endorsed the Polish United Workers' Party and only 10.6 percent took the opportunity to cross off the Party's list of candidates (see Ascherson, 1981:81). Although many non-Party candidates won more votes than many leading Communists, Gomulka topped the lists. In general, the party "liberals" fared much better than the Party's orthodox Marxists. According to M. K. Dzięwanowski, a generally hostile historian of the Polish Party: "The change of political atmosphere brought about by the October upheaval was deep and Gomulka's



popularity genuine. . . . In the elections, which were sort of a national referendum, the Polish people gave a conditional approval to Gomulka's October program" (Dziewanowski, 1976:286-87).

The elected workers' councils that were set up in 1956 had the power to allocate the profits of the enterprise, propose the dismissal and appointment of top managers, and otherwise to make fundamental decisions within enterprises compatible with the (reduced) imperatives of the central plan and basic economic laws. The councils came to operate as an arena of struggle among the manual workers, the younger, technically educated staff, and the top managers (mostly older manual workers promoted from the bench ten years before, on political grounds), as well as a means for all three groups to resist the central planning authorities.

The workers' councils eventually became dominated by the technical intelligentsia (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:106-07; Matejko, 1974:115), often in alliance with younger, lower-level managers and younger, skilled manual workers. The workers came to elect mostly members of the technical intelligentsia (engineers and economists) to represent them on the councils, a phenomenon that was to be repeated 25 years later in Solidarity.

The workers, especially the unskilled manual workers, pressed for an egalitarian wage and bonus policy, as well as for a relaxation of work discipline. Some councils at first introduced the system of paying bonuses solely on the basis of number of years in the factory, independent of the basic wage or technical qualifications. Although it appears that the majority of manual workers continued to favor such a principle of distribution, the skilled workers and technical staff insisted on modifying it to accord themselves a higher share in the bonus fund; in the majority of cases the principle finally worked out was related to the skill level of workers (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:107-08). The engineers and technicians maintained that inequality of wages and bonuses was necessary to promote efficiency and productivity.

The net result of the changes in incomes policy introduced by the 1956 reforms and the operation of the workers' councils was to increase the income gap between the manual working class and the technical intelligentsia. From 1958 to 1962 the growth in income of nonmanual families was 10 percent greater than that of manual families (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:123, 312). With the growing

professionalization of management that occurred at the same time—which brought the increasing power of the younger, technically educated administrators over the older, “promoted” managers—the gap between management’s increasingly technically oriented goals and those of the manual workers grew (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:312).

The workers’ councils were used by the younger technical intelligentsia, often in coalition with the older managers and workers, to gain greater autonomy of the enterprises from the central planning agencies. The councils, generally with the support of the managers, consistently pushed for decentralization of economic decision making (the differences between the top managers and the councils were on the question of who would have greater say in decision making within a more decentralized economy). Decentralization was especially favored by the technically educated younger managers, while many of the older, nontechnically educated managers resisted decentralization, continuing to identify with strong central planning (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:109, 194, 312).

As a result of the increasing power of the younger technical intelligentsia in the workers’ councils, the undermining of the central plan, and the growing disillusionment among manual workers with the practice of the councils, their powers were cut back in December 1958. The role of the workers’ councils as the primary decision-making power in the enterprise was reduced to that of one constituent organization (along with the Party, the union, and the enterprise technical organization) in the new Conference of Workers’ Self-Management. Coincident with this reform was a general strengthening of the role of trade unions, which were somewhat decentralized (brought closer to the workers) and given the right to use brief strikes against recalcitrant management (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:138). The role of the Party factory committees was enhanced, against the resistance of the technically educated administrators. The Party argued thus:

... the working class was not sufficiently prepared to manage the workers’ democracy implied in the formation of the workers’ councils. [The Party] emphasized its own role in preparing the “new working class” for democracy and minimized the importance of immediately widening democracy. The party maintained that it had to be included in self-management because, it



claimed, the demand that workers' councils should run the enterprise in sole partnership with the management exaggerated the extent of the workers' socialist consciousness. (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:138-39)

In order to reduce the role of the technical intelligentsia in the councils, a requirement that two-thirds of the members of the councils had to be manual workers was instituted. The role of the workers' councils in selecting enterprise administrators was significantly reduced. Its role now became one of giving its advice only on matters of appointment and dismissal of top administrators. The authority of top administrators, by now mostly technically educated, was considerably increased as a result of these changes.

Of the various enterprise bodies, the Party factory committee, composed mainly of older, skilled manual workers, came to exert predominant power that, in good part, was exercised in the interests of the skilled manual workers. Meanwhile, the technical intelligentsia continued to exert pressure on top management through the workers' councils and the executive of the trade unions, in which they also came to have a strong influence.

A study in 1961 found that 46 percent of manual workers believed that the Party factory committee had the greatest authority in the work place, 25 percent believed that this role fell to the union executive, and only 8 percent believed the most influential body was the workers' council (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:140-41). The balance of power in industrial enterprises after 1958 thus appeared to reflect a coalition between the older, skilled manual workers and the younger, technically expert intelligentsia (administration and staff). A study done in the early 1960s found that the level of "felt moral responsibility for enterprise affairs" was significantly higher for skilled workers than for the unskilled (37 percent versus 22 percent felt morally responsible for the enterprise), and significantly higher for those white-collar workers with a technical education than for those without (51 percent versus 42 percent) (Pirages, 1972:120). These findings would seem to reflect overall commitment to the organization of industry as well as the extent to which various groups felt involved in decision making.

During the 1960s the Polish economy ran into economic problems. In 1962 austerity measures were announced and industrial growth plans had to be curtailed, and in 1963 the price of energy was

significantly increased. In the late 1960s the mass of babies born after the war entered the labor force, straining the planned economy's ability to provide everyone with a job. The rate of increase in real wages declined. The Gomulka leadership responded to these problems by shifting the emphasis toward heavy industry while neglecting production of consumption goods. The percentage of the national income given to investment rose from 24.2 percent in 1960 to 29.7 percent in 1969. In order to accelerate industrialization, Poland began to turn toward high-technology imports from the West, largely exporting food in exchange (Dziewanowski, 1976:304-06).

On December 13, 1970, the government decreed a major increase in food prices, some commodities' prices being raised by 30 percent. This was done in order to reduce both the heavy food subsidy and the problem of shortages caused by people having more paper money than the aggregate price of goods available. At the same time there were reforms in the industrial wage scale. These decrees were met with mass demonstrations led by dock and shipyard workers in the three major Baltic coastal cities: Gdansk, Gdynia, and Szczecin. During five days of rioting, which spread to other cities, a number of Party headquarters and government offices were destroyed, and shops were looted. The army had to be called out to restore order. According to official reports, a total of 45 people were killed. As in October 1956, Polish socialism was once again plunged into profound crisis. How was it that such strategically placed workers could riot against a Socialist government? (Dziewanowski, 1976:306-07).

The occurrence of these riots against price increases in the Baltic coastal cities has been attributed to both a relative deprivation effect and the especially homogeneous nature of the Baltic working class. It has been argued by some Western analysts that the closeness of the Baltic cities to the West, the exposure of workers to Western life-styles through tourists and foreign ships, and the existence of tourist resorts and private villas along the coast throw the lower living standards of the Polish workers into sharp contrast (see Dziewanowski, 1976:307; Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:314-15). The Baltic working class was largely made up of younger workers from rural areas in other parts of Poland (most of the Baltic coast region had not been part of Poland before 1945). The extremely large scale of the shipbuilding industries, combined with the workers' similar backgrounds and relative lack of working-class traditions, resulted in the Baltic working class



being especially homogeneous and easily moved to respond as a group to what it perceived to be in its immediate interest (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:314-15).

Although the riots of December 1970 broke out in response to food price increases, the demands of the workers soon expanded to wider issues. Although the thrust of the demonstrations continued to be economic and not political, the Gdansk workers also demanded open elections to the trade unions and workers' councils, and the enhancement of the powers of the latter institutions. The demonstrators also called for "the leading cadres" in the factories to be "highly educated and knowledgeable," as well as "efficient and where possible young"—that is, for the younger, technical intelligentsia to be granted more power at the expense of older, more politically oriented administrators from working-class backgrounds (cited in Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:312).

That the workers' protests were neither anti-Socialist nor anti-Party, but directed toward specific policies of the Party, was reflected in the fact that many of the leaders of the workers' movement were rank-and-file Party members. In Szczecin a Party activist was elected head of the strike committee. In Gdansk 40 percent of the 83 delegates selected to put the workers' demands to the Party leadership were rank-and-file Party activists (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:150). Once again it is clear that the conflict in Poland was between two different strategies of socialist construction; rapid industrialization, with emphasis on central planning pressed on the people by the Party leadership, versus short-term increases in living standards and decentralized decision making. The head of the Party declared that there was a crisis of confidence between the Party and the masses, as well as ". . . amongst members of the party, among its activists, who viewed ever more critically the policy of the leadership" (cited in Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:150).

On December 20, 1970, Edward Gierek replaced Gomulka as head of the Polish Party. Although Gierek was a coal miner as a youth, he had a technical education and orientation. His closest associates were younger, technically trained experts whose emphasis was on "modernization" rather than orthodoxy. Of the new Politburo members 25 percent had doctorates, another 40 percent had masters' degrees, and 15 percent had other degrees. Their average age was 46 (Dziewanowski, 1976:321). The Gierek leadership wasted little time in promising to be more responsive to the working class and to raising

consumption standards. In January the Szczecin workers' committee summoned the top Party leadership to discuss the local workers' grievances. Gierek personally responded to the invitation, along with a number of other top Party leaders, spending a free-ranging ten hours listening and responding to complaints. Similar mass meetings were held in other major industrial cities, including Gdansk, Lodz, and Bialystok. As a result of these meetings the new leadership agreed to most of the workers' demands, which included the dismissal and punishment of many Party leaders involved in suppressing the December riots (see Dziewanowski, 1976:313).

Gierek's presentations to the workers stressed his background as a coal miner and the potential disaster to Polish socialism if the working class did not rally behind the Party: "I say to you: help us, help me . . . I am only a worker like you. . . . But now, and I tell you this in all solemnity as a Pole and as a Communist, the fate of our nation and the cause of socialism are in the balance" (cited in Ascherson 1981:104). Gierek promised the workers a reinvigoration of internal Party democracy, and that the workers at the largest factories would have both direct access to him and direct representation at Party congresses (Ascherson, 1981:107). Gierek was successful in rallying the workers. In Ascherson's words: "The workers were impressed that he had come to them, and they were inclined to trust him" (Ascherson, 1981:104).

The government reversed the December 13 price increases and promised a two-year freeze on food prices. An increased supply of low-priced consumption goods was also promised. The minimum wage, pensions, and family allowances were increased. The 1971-75 Five-Year Plan was redrafted to stress production of agricultural and light industrial goods, as well as housing. The government promised to start the production of inexpensive Polish automobiles. Compulsory delivery quotas for the peasants were abolished in January 1972, private ownership of the land was guaranteed, and a significantly higher purchase price was instituted for milk. Free health care and social security were, for the first time, extended to private peasants. Greater powers were granted to the trade unions and more decentralization of economic decision making was promised. Concessions were also granted to the cultural intelligentsia. Foreign travel was made easier, censorship was relaxed, and professors' salaries and funds for scientific research were increased (Dziewanowski, 1976: 314-15).



Economic decision making was in good measure decentralized from the central economic ministries to the new associations of enterprises. Centrally planned directives were reduced to the following: value of sales; value of exports; volume of production; purchases; limits on total wage payments; investment guidelines; and financial results. The association directors obtained wide discretion in the areas of prices, investment, and wages. At the same time the authority of enterprise directors was accordingly reduced (U.S. Army, 1973:217).

The new Party leadership put forth the slogans "developed socialism" and "Socialist democracy," promising both to radically increase living standards and to expand the popular role in decision making. Gierek's proposals struck a popular chord:

His athletic presence, his talent for plain speaking, his instinct for the crowds, and his flair for the theatrical won him wide popularity. He presented to the nation the spectacular daring and ambitious policy of "dynamic growth," promising to improve living standards quickly and radically. In the Poland of 1971, this is what the people wanted above all. (Dobbs et al., 1981:38-39)

After the 1970 events the Gierek leadership revitalized the workers' councils. At least in 1972-74 most Polish workers considered them to be relatively effective. One study of 3,000 industrial workers conducted over the period 1972-74 found that 81 percent of workers earning more than 5,000 zlotys per month and 54 percent of those earning less than 2,000 zlotys said that pressing their demands by using the workers' self-management bodies was likely to be effective. This compared with 79 percent and 48 percent, respectively, who felt that taking their demands to Party organizations, and 66 percent and 55 percent respectively, who felt that complaining directly to management would be effective (Pravda, 1983:78). It is of interest that 67 percent of workers earning over 5,000 zlotys and 24 percent of those earning less than 2,000 zlotys felt that taking "concerted action" would be effective. Thus, at least among well-paid industrial workers, the traditions of direct collective action in pursuit of their work place interests were strong—and, as 1970 showed, effective.

In secret, direct balloting immediately after worker's strikes and demonstrations in 1976, 280,000 workers were elected to councils. Although the councils were again enlivened, as they had been after

1970, disenchantment among workers soon set in once again about their effectiveness in ensuring a strong role for production workers in running the enterprises and associations (Woodall, 1982:132). By December 1978 there were only 536 enterprises in which workers' councils were still active, about a tenth the number that had existed in 1957. Although the councils were reinvigorated after each crisis, the long-term trend was decay and disestablishment in the face of worker apathy (promoted by disillusionment with their effectiveness). The remaining councils came to function essentially like production conferences in which primary attention was given to questions of improving productivity, largely by technical and administrative rather than political means. They then largely became tools of the administration's and technical staff's emphasis on increasing output (Woodall, 1982:132-33). Thus, by the end of the 1970s a reservoir of discontent had built up among the working class, both about its standard of living and about its isolation from the administrative-technical elite that was in command of the economy at both the central and the enterprise levels.

Gierek talked about turning Poland into a developed Socialist society with an intellectualized working class, in which manual toil and routine mental work would be replaced by automated technology. Higher education was stressed as an essential part of the intellectualization of the working class and its eventual integration with the intelligentsia. In fact, in 1970-76 higher and technical education was rapidly expanded, and lower-level administrative and technical staff positions were significantly increased, largely filled by the children of workers and peasants (see Woodall, 1982:15, 16).

Gierek reorganized the economic administration, as well as the Party, in such a way as to reduce the role of Party units within the enterprises. The new associations of enterprises, unlike the older single-unit enterprises, were largely isolated from supervision by local and regional Party units (in which workers had considerable influence). The managers of the associations now had power to deal directly with the central ministries. At the same time, large numbers of older (and more politically experienced) Party cadres were replaced by younger university graduates more expert in "public administration" than politically motivated. The net result of these changes was that the local Party officials became increasingly distant from the Party's working-class rank and file, the local plant managers became increasingly insulated from the local Party branches, and the associ-



ation managers and central ministries increasingly operated according to their own technical criteria. The Party's working-class base and its authority within the working class were consequently greatly weakened (see MacDonald, 1983:13).

The first half of the 1970s was a period of rapidly increasing living standards for the working class as export-oriented growth, combined with increasing state subsidies for workers' food (and peasants' products), fulfilled Gierek's promise. But the recession in the world capitalist economy had serious repercussions in Poland: exports declined and the growing food subsidies became unwieldy. In June 1976, in an attempt to bring food prices closer to the costs of agricultural production, there was a 60 percent increase in food prices. As had happened so many times, it precipitated a number of spontaneous strikes and worker demonstrations calling for a reversal of the price increase. The scale of these 1976 strikes and riots, however, was relatively limited, compared with those of 1970 and 1980 (Ascher-son, 1981:113). These demonstrations marked the growing disenchantment with the Gierek reforms and policies, a disenchantment that was to simmer throughout the last part of the 1970s in the face of a deteriorating economic situation, until it broke out anew in the summer of 1980, once again in response to increases in the price of food caused by the necessity to reduce the massive subsidy to peasants and workers represented by selling basic food products far below their costs of production.

The first settlement in the city of Boston was made by a small number of Englishmen in the year 1630. They were led by John Winthrop, who was a Puritan minister. They came to the city in three ships, the *Arcturion*, the *Hesperus*, and the *Speedwell*. They landed on the 1st of September, 1630, and found a small number of Indians who had been living there for many years. The Indians were friendly to the Englishmen, and they taught them the language and the customs of the country. The Englishmen were very hardworking, and they soon began to build houses and to plant crops. They also began to teach the Indians the English language and the Christian religion. In the year 1631, more Englishmen came to the city, and they joined the first settlement. By the year 1634, the city had grown to a size of about 100 houses. The city was called *Boston* in honor of Boston, Lincolnshire, in England. The city was the first of many settlements that were made in the New England colonies. It was the first city to have a city government, and it was the first city to have a city court. It was also the first city to have a city school. The city of Boston has since grown to a size of about 100,000 houses, and it is one of the largest cities in the United States.



# Industrialization and Inequality in Poland

## —3—

### Industrialization and Economic Growth

Beginning in 1948, the consolidated socialist regime began emphasizing rapid industrialization as the key to modernizing the Polish economy and raising working-class and peasant living standards, as well as to developing firm support for the transition to socialism. The PUWP emphasized massive industrial projects, the most striking being the Lenin Steel Works in Nowa Huta, the new industrial suburb of Cracow. The conscious intention of the emphasis on heavy industry was

. . . to create a large new and strong socialist urban working class society, which would in time influence the development of the social structure and social relations in an old and extraordinarily staid population such as existed in Krakow. (cited in Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:94)

The realization of the extremely ambitious goals of the Six-Year Plan launched in 1950 required a general belt tightening, as well as hard work, so that a modern industrial economy could be constructed in a relatively short time. Over the plan period between 25 percent and 30 percent of the national income was reinvested. Forty-five percent of all investment went into industry—mostly heavy industry, such as metallurgy and machine building—and only 9 percent into agriculture (Dziewanowski, 1976:264). As a result the total

industrial product increased 3.2 times between 1948 and 1955 and 5.0 times between 1948 and 1960 (United Nations, 1963:101), the annual rates of growth being 23 percent and 16 percent, respectively. The proportion of gross national income originating in industry grew from less than 33 percent in the 1930s to 64 percent in 1979 (Matejko, 1974:68; World Bank, 1981:table 3).

Poland's annual rate of growth (in net material output) in 1960-70 was 6.2 percent and in 1970-78, 8.1 percent. Its rate of growth in industrial production averaged 8.3 percent per year in 1960-70 and 9.8 percent per year in 1970-78. Further, there was a rate of growth in personal consumption of 5.0 percent per year in 1960-70 and 8.0 percent in 1970-78 (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1. Poland's Annual Rates of Growth, 1960-61 to 1977-78 (percent)

	<i>Net material product</i>	<i>NMP/ capita</i>	<i>Personal consumption</i>	<i>Industrial activity</i>	<i>Net fixed capital formation</i>
1960-61	8.2	6.7	5.6	10.6	8.3
1961-62	2.1	0.9	2.8	8.6	16.7
1962-63	6.9	5.7	4.6	5.3	1.0
1963-64	6.8	5.1	4.3	10.2	4.7
1964-65	7.0	5.8	5.8	9.9	12.0
1965-66	7.1	6.4	5.8	7.0	12.4
1966-67	5.7	4.9	4.8	7.2	12.4
1967-68	9.0	7.8	6.3	9.4	12.2
1968-69	2.9	2.8	4.4	8.4	6.9
1969-70	5.2	4.6	4.0	6.8	2.3
1970-71	8.1	7.2	7.0	9.7	10.4
1971-72	10.6	9.7	8.8	9.2	27.5
1972-73	10.8	9.9	8.5	11.6	27.2
1973-74	10.4	9.4	6.8	12.0	22.6
1974-75	6.9	5.9	12.0	11.4	4.2
1975-76	7.1	6.1	8.7	9.7	1.7
1976-77	5.0	4.0	6.6	7.7	4.3
1977-78	3.0	2.1	1.0	2.5	-3.3
1960-70	6.2	5.2	5.0	8.3	9.3
1970-78	8.1	7.1	8.0	9.8	12.4

Source: United Nations, 1975:II, table 4B; 1979:II, table 6B.



These rates of growth considerably exceeded those of the United States and Western Europe at the same time, and contrast extremely strongly with the economic stagnation of the 1918–39 Polish economy. In 1970–79 Poland's annual average rate of growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 6.1 percent a year was more rapid than that of all other industrialized countries in the world except Bulgaria (whose rate of growth was 6.2 percent). For example, the Japanese rate of growth was 5.2 percent; the West German, 2.6 percent; the U.S., 3.1 percent; the East German, 4.5 percent; and the Soviet, 5.1 percent (see Table 3.2 and World Bank, 1981:table 2).

The rapid industrialization policies followed by the Polish government had made Poland by 1979 the ninth biggest industrial power in the world, ahead of India, Brazil, Sweden, Canada, Belgium, Spain, the Netherlands, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany in terms of value of industrial output (see World Bank, 1981:tables 1, 3).

The rapid industrialization of the country brought with it the very rapid expansion in the number of those employed in industry, especially the manual working class and technical intelligentsia. Employment in industry grew from 23 percent of the economically active population in 1950 to 29 percent in 1960 and 39 percent in 1979. The blue-collar working class grew from 25.3 percent of the total labor force in 1931 to 33.5 percent in 1960 and 42.2 percent in 1978. Just in the 1948–54 period of highly intensive industrialization, the industrial labor force grew from 3 million to 6 million (Dziewanowski, 1976:254; Zagorski, 1978a:51; Zagorski, 1978b:67; World Bank, 1981:table 19). As a result of the rapid industrialization, there was a massive migration of peasants to the cities to become industrial workers. In 1946–50 alone over 7 million moved to the towns, settling mostly in the former German territories annexed in 1945, especially along the northern seacoast (Lane and Kolaniewicz, 1973:93).

From 1950 to 1960 the rapid industrialization policy had reduced the proportion of the population that was rural from 63 percent to 52 percent, by 1970 to 48 percent, and by 1980 to 43 percent of the total. Although significant, this was not an especially radical decrease, given the experience of other socialist, or even rapidly growing less-developed capitalist, countries—for instance, the Soviet Union in 1980 was 35 percent rural, whereas in 1960 it had been 51 percent—the same as Poland in the latter year (see Lane and Ko-

Table 3.2. Polish Economic Development in Comparative Perspective, 1960-79

	<i>GNP per capita in dollars in 1979</i>	<i>Annual rate of growth in GNP per capita (%) 1960-79</i>	<i>Annual rate of growth in GDP (%)</i>		<i>Percentage of the labor force in</i>			
			<i>1960-70</i>	<i>1970-79</i>	<i>Industry</i>		<i>Agriculture</i>	
					<i>1960</i>	<i>1979</i>	<i>1960</i>	<i>1979</i>
Poland	\$ 3,830	5.2	4.3	6.1	29	39	48	31
USSR	4,110	4.1	5.2	5.1	29	44	42	15
East Germany	6,430	4.7	3.1	4.5	48	50	18	10
Hungary	3,850	4.8	3.8	5.3	35	52	38	16
Czechoslovakia	5,290	4.1	3.1	4.8	46	48	26	11
Bulgaria	3,690	5.6	5.9	6.2	25	38	57	38
Yugoslavia	2,430	5.4	5.8	5.9	18	33	63	31
USA	10,630	2.4	4.3	3.1	36	32	7	2
UK	6,320	2.2	2.9	2.1	48	42	4	2
West Germany	11,730	3.3	4.4	2.6	48	47	14	4
France	9,950	4.0	5.7	3.7	39	39	22	9
Italy	5,250	3.6	5.3	2.9	40	45	31	11
Sweden	11,930	2.4	4.4	2.0	45	35	14	5
Finland	8,160	4.1	4.6	2.8	31	35	36	12
Spain	4,380	4.7	7.1	4.4	31	40	42	15
Mexico	1,640	2.7	7.2	5.1	20	26	55	37
Brazil	1,780	4.8	5.4	8.7	15	22	52	40
Argentina	2,230	2.4	4.2	2.5	36	28	20	13
All industrial market economies	9,440	4.0	5.1	3.2	39	38	16	6
Nonmarket industrial economies	4,230	4.3	4.8	5.2	31	44	41	17
Middle-income economies	1,420	3.8	6.1	5.5	17	23	58	43

Source: World Bank 1981: tables 1, 2, 19.



lankiewicz, 1973:Appendix 1; World Bank, 1981:table 20). The portion of the labor force that was self-employed farmers was reduced from 61 percent in 1931 and 53 percent in 1950 to 33 percent in 1972 and about 30 percent in 1979. In comparison with countries having a similar industrial output per capita, Poland has an exceptionally high proportion of its labor force in agriculture. This reflects the fact that Poland, along with Yugoslavia among socialist countries, has never socialized its agriculture, choosing instead heavy subsidies for inefficient small farmers who have continued to utilize almost entirely premechanized techniques of production.

The rapid increase in the living standards of the workers and peasants in post-World War II Poland is reflected in the trends in meat consumption. In 1966–68 Poles were consuming an average of 47, and in 1975–77, 61, grams of animal protein per day. This is higher than the Western European average, and almost equal to that of the United States. For example, in 1975–77 West Germans ate an average of 55 grams per day; Italians, 45; and Swedes, 62. In the United States animal protein consumption per capita was 73 grams a day, and in the USSR, 51 grams (FAO, 1978:table 9).

The rise in living standards has also been reflected in a radical increase in social services available to the Polish working class. In 1977 there was one physician per 610 people in Poland, compared with one per 1,070 in 1960 and one per 2,660 in 1938—the average for all the advanced capitalist countries in 1979 was one per 620 people. The attention given by the socialist state to health care was reflected in the radical reduction in infant mortality from 140 per 1,000 live births in 1935 and 111 in 1950 to 22 per 1,000 in 1978 (the U.S. rate in the mid-1960s) (see U.N. *Statistical Yearbook*, various; World Bank, 1981:tables 20, 21).

After 1970 Poland began to look increasingly to the West for imports of high-technology goods while reducing the proportion of its trade with the other socialist countries. The 1971–75 Five-Year Plan called for an 11 percent annual rate of increase in the expansion of foreign trade, mostly with the West (Dziewanowski, 1976:314). Imports from Eastern Europe declined from 65.7 percent of all imports in 1970 to 42.1 percent in 1974 (imports from the USSR alone declined from 37.7 percent to 22.4 percent over the same period), rising again to about 50 percent (and 30 percent) in 1977–78. Meanwhile, imports from the Common Market countries almost doubled, rising from 16.8 percent to 30.6 percent of the total in 1970–74, then slipping to 23 percent in 1977–78. Imports from the United States grew

from 1.6 percent of the total in 1970 to 6.0 percent in 1976 (see Table 3.3). There was a much smaller reorientation of Polish exports to the West at the same time. From taking 17.7 percent of Polish exports in 1970, the Common Market's share rose to 22.6 percent in 1974, then fell to 19 percent in 1978-79, while the U.S. share stayed essentially constant over the 1969-79 period. The primary market for Polish exports remained the Soviet Union, which averaged 35 percent of the total in 1970-73, and 31 percent in 1974-78. The greater shift toward imports was accounted for by the heavy financing of imports from the West by Western banks, and by the corollary of the rapidly accumulating Polish debt.

The cornerstone of the post-1970 policy was to borrow heavily from Western financial institutions in order to import Western high technology so as to generate a rapid rate of industrial growth that would allow Poland both to pay back its extensive foreign debt and to continue to raise the living standards of both workers and peasants. In order to ensure domestic peace, Poland avoided austerity measures, relying instead on increasing the subsidies paid the peasants (for their inefficiently produced output) and the workers (for whom food prices were kept artificially low). During the 1970s wage increases consistently outpaced productivity increases. In essence, the foreign banks were used to subsidize the peasants' and workers' living standards so that a rapid industrialization policy could be pursued without social disruption.

The 1970-75 period was extremely successful economically. In these years national income grew by 9.4 percent a year (the rate was 6.0 percent from 1965 to 1970), industrial production by 10.8 percent (it was 7.8 percent from 1965 to 1970), and net fixed capital formation by 18.4 percent (it was 9.2 percent from 1965 to 1970), while wages grew by about 12 percent a year (compared with about 2 percent a year from 1965 to 1970). Food prices remained frozen over the 1970-75 period. Between 1971 and 1974 productivity grew at 7 percent a year (Hare and Wanless, 1981:505; also Table 3.1 in this chapter).

Between 1970 and 1975 the index of the prices of goods rose from 107.7 to 110.5 (1960 prices = 100). This represented less than a 1 percent rate of inflation. Meanwhile, free market prices rose from 109.6 to 150.0, reflecting the rapidly growing subsidy component in the basic necessities of life (Hare and Wanless, 1981:493). While state subsidies amounted to approximately 11 percent of national income in 1973, they stood at about 17 percent in 1975, and by 1977 had



Table 3.3. Trends in Polish Trade, 1969-79 (percentage distribution)

	<i>Eastern Europe</i>	<i>USSR</i>	<i>Developed Capitalist</i>	<i>EEC</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>Total (millions of zloty)</i>	<i>Trade deficit</i>
	<i>Imports from</i>						
1969	62.8	37.4	29.2	18.5	1.5	12.8	- .3
1970	65.7	37.7	27.2	16.8	1.6	14.4	- .3
1971	64.1	35.3	29.5	17.6	2.0	16.2	- .7
1972	58.1	29.9	35.4	21.5	2.1	19.6	- 1.5
1973	49.3	24.4	46.1	27.6	4.0	26.1	- 4.7
1974	42.1	22.4	52.3	30.6	4.5	34.8	- 7.2
1975	43.6	25.3	50.8	28.0	4.7	41.6	- 7.5
1976	44.8	25.5	50.4	26.7	6.0	46.1	- 9.5
1977	49.6	29.1	44.3	23.8	3.7	48.6	- 7.8
1978	51.5	29.9	41.4	22.0	4.4	50.9	- 6.3

1979	—	—	—	—	—	54.0	- 3.9
	<i>Exports to</i>						
1969	61.7	35.7	28.4	15.9	2.9	12.6	
1970	60.3	35.3	29.9	17.7	2.6	14.2	
1971	59.3	35.8	31.5	18.6	2.7	15.5	
1972	60.5	36.9	31.9	18.8	2.6	18.2	
1973	57.9	32.4	35.4	21.7	3.0	21.4	
1974	52.8	28.5	37.8	22.6	3.1	27.6	
1975	56.7	31.5	33.3	18.7	2.3	34.2	
1976	56.8	30.3	33.5	18.8	2.6	36.6	
1977	57.0	31.7	33.0	18.6	3.0	40.7	
1978	57.5	33.9	33.3	19.7	3.3	44.7	
1979	—	—	—	—	—	50.1	

Source: United Nations, 1979:776, 777.

risen to almost 20 percent. While the bulk of this enormous subsidy has gone to maintain food prices in the shops considerably below the prices paid to farmers, numerous other commodities are subsidized as well: housing, public transport, child care, children's clothing. Popular support for the government has depended on continually rising subsidies for both workers and peasants, subsidies that since 1975 had been increasingly underwritten by Western banks (Hare and Wanless, 1981:503).

Poland, however, got caught in the squeeze of the world economy. During the world recession of 1975–76 Western purchases of Polish exports declined, and Poland's debt burden thus got out of hand. At the same time, since real wages had been rising more rapidly than productivity, funds for reinvestment were significantly reduced. The policy of maintaining food prices below the cost of production meant that the growing amount of money in circulation was leading to serious shortages in the stores. In order to eliminate shortages, the food subsidy was reduced in 1976 through an average 60 percent increase in food prices, which adjusted the money in circulation to the aggregate value of food to be sold and simultaneously reduced the heavy subsidy of workers' wages. As periodically happens in Poland, the response to the announced price hike was the outbreak of spontaneous strikes and rioting. The Gierek regime immediately withdrew the price hike, resorting instead to increasing foreign loans to balance the books.

Because of the government's policy, adopted in the summer of 1980, of granting wage increases whenever workers demanded them, after August 1980 the amount of money in circulation grew very rapidly (pay increases between the summer of 1980 and the summer of 1981 averaged 20–25 percent) at the same time that the production of goods decreased by about 15 percent (see *New York Times*, September 28, 1981). Subsidized necessities, lowered output, 20–25 percent pay increases, and reduced imports—as a result of a shortage of foreign exchange, the banks had reached the limits of the credit they were willing to provide—of course resulted in shortages and long lines.

After 1975 Poland began to sink into economic crisis. The rate of growth in industrial production shrank from 10.7 percent in 1976 to 8.6 percent in 1977, to 5.8 percent in 1978, 2.8 percent in 1979, and finally to roughly 1.5 percent in the first eight months of 1981 (*New York Times*, September 15, 1981; December 15, 1981). By November 1981 Polish national income had declined to its 1974 level (*Wall Street Journal*, November 30, 1981). The Polish foreign debt to the



West increased in counterpoint: from \$1.6 billion in 1972 to \$4.6 billion in 1974, \$11.5 billion in 1976, \$17.8 billion in 1978, \$21.1 billion in 1979, \$24.0 billion in 1980, and \$27 billion by mid-1981 (New York *Times*, December 15, 1981). By 1981 just the servicing of the Polish debt to Western banks was eating up almost three-quarters of all Poland's hard-currency export earnings, leaving little to pay for the spare parts, machinery, and raw materials needed to maintain and expand Polish industry (New York *Times*, September 28, 1981; Nuti, 1981:24). Poland's economic problems were seriously aggravated by the government's granting of Solidarity's demand for a five-day workweek, as well as by the general decline in productivity. Coal exports, a major source of hard-currency earnings, sank from 40 million tons in 1979 to approximately 10 million tons in 1981 (New York *Times*, September 28, 1981). The growth in personal consumption declined from an average of 8.6 percent in 1970-76 to 6.6 percent in 1976-77 and 1.0 percent in 1977-78 (see Table 3.1). After 1975 inflation became a factor in the Polish economy. By 1980 prices were rising at an annual rate of 8.5 percent, and over the first six months of 1981 at an annual rate of 30 percent (Nuti, 1981:24). The fuse that ignited the time bomb that went off in the summer of 1980 was lit in 1976.

As a result of Poland's increasing crisis, manifested in its growing foreign debt and lessening ability to meet its payments, the international banks increased their pressure. In order to secure a major new loan, essentially needed to make the payments on previous loans, the banks required the Polish government to allow them to oversee the Polish economy.

As part of an effort to obtain a major, new loan, Poland has agreed to permit Western banks to monitor its economic policies, American bankers say. They regard the concession as a historic breakthrough in the financial relations with the communist world. . . . To persuade the banks to agree to the new financing, Poland has already had to announce a strict, new budget for 1979 and provide its creditors with comprehensive, new information on its financial situation. . . . The banks involved in the new credit will henceforth track the progress of the Polish economy much as the International Monetary Fund monitors the economies of non-communist countries in financial distress. (New York *Times*, January 26, 1979)

The *Times* went on to quote a banker: ". . . we made it clear that belt-tightening was a prerequisite to any new credits. . . . It

gives Western capitalism a certain say in how the Poles proceed." Poland, thus, had slipped under the domination of its creditors, who insisted on austerity measures. In April 1980 a meeting of Poland's foreign creditors held in Warsaw demanded that the government reduce its food subsidy by significantly increasing food prices, as the condition for rescheduling Poland's huge debt. To quote the *Wall Street Journal*, "Western banks are starting to ask a lot of overdue questions in a tone that suggests they expect more than just a little say in running Poland for the foreseeable future" (*Wall Street Journal*, November 19, 1981). In June the government doubled the price of sugar. On July 1 it announced general increases in the price of meat. In response, spontaneous strikes broke out in July and August. A mass strike wave accelerated, culminating in the Gdansk agreements of August 31, 1980, in which the government agreed (among other things) to index wages to price increases (thereby negating the economically necessary price rises) and to recognize "independent unions."

The banks were interested not only in forcing the Polish government to reduce its subsidy to workers, but also in forcing it to implement reforms that they felt would increase productivity. Two of the most important of these seem to have been the decentralization of the economy—that is, granting increased authority to enterprise managers and reducing the role of the central planning agencies—and giving "greater support to the private farmers as the most efficient producers" (see *Washington Post*, February 11, 1981). The banks also gave increasing support to Solidarity. In March 1981, after meeting with Polish authorities, the banks stated that among the conditions for the continued rescheduling of the Polish debt was Solidarity's being guaranteed "relative freedom of action" (*New York Times*, March 31, 1981).

### Inequality

Before World War II, Poland had an extremely rigid class structure, with the privileged landowning, urban wealthy, and middle-class positions pretty much passed on from father to son. There was little chance for children of poor peasants or urban proletarians to leave the class of their parents. Between the wars approximately two-thirds of all male and three-fourths of all female university students were from the wealthy landowning, urban wealthy, and upper middle classes. About 25 percent of upper- and upper-middle-class children went to the university, compared with less than 1 percent of



manual worker and poor or middle peasant children (Matejko, 1974:6). The old system of property wealth and hereditary privilege was destroyed by the war.

The socialist regime wiped out illiteracy. While in 1935, 25 percent of the adult population could not read or write, this figure had been reduced to 2 percent in 1978. While in the early 1950s only 40 percent of those 14–17 years old were attending school, by the early 1970s this figure had reached 90 percent. Between 1960 and 1970 the proportion of the total population that had at least some vocational or secondary education rose from 16.9 percent to 30.6 percent. The number of people with a secondary or higher education grew from about 100,000 in 1945 to 2.5 million in 1960 and almost 4 million by 1970. Polish manual workers are now far more educated than they used to be. In 1973, 48 percent of workers between 55 and 65 years of age (who were of primary school age in the 1920s) had not completed primary school. This contrasted with only 2.5 percent of workers between 16 and 29. Only 7 percent of workers aged 55–65 had more than a primary school education, compared with approximately 50 percent of workers under 30. Only 7 percent of workers between 55 and 65 had completed secondary or vocational school, compared with 55 percent of workers less than 25 years old and 41 percent of those 25–29. Clearly, the educational level of Polish workers has been rising rapidly (see Jarosinska and Kulpinski, 1978:182; Matejko, 1974:39, 109, 144).

Immediately after liberation, children of peasant and working-class backgrounds were actively recruited into the technical schools and universities; there was a crash program of accelerated education immediately after the war to make up for the suspension of all secondary and higher education, as well as to provide for the rapidly expanding needs of the industrializing economy. Applicants from peasant and worker backgrounds were given extra points on entrance exams to enhance their chances of admission. About one-third of all places in secondary and higher schools were reserved for working-class children. Secondary and higher education was made free, and supplementary economic benefits were paid to allow working-class and peasant students to maintain themselves while studying. The number of university students rose from 140 per 100,000 in 1937 to 1,430 per 100,000 in 1976 (Allardt and Wesolowski, 1978:223; Zagorski, 1976:19, 21; U.S. Army, 1973:99).

In 1951, 36 percent of full-time university students were from working-class backgrounds and 24 percent from peasant backgrounds. In 1960–61, 29 percent of the far bigger university enroll-

ment were from working-class backgrounds and 19 percent from peasant backgrounds, while 47 percent were the children of the intelligentsia. The working-class and peasant percentages continued to decline slowly until 1967, when a system of "affirmative action" was instituted that immediately produced a rise in both working-class and peasant admissions. The percentage from working-class backgrounds increased from 26 percent in 1967 to 32 percent in 1968 and 1969 (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:210). Working-class children were most likely to be in schools of higher economics (34 percent of the total), teacher training institutions (36 percent), and technical schools (30 percent), while peasant children were most likely to be in agricultural schools. Children of the intelligentsia were most likely to be in medical schools and universities (Pirages, 1972:90). By the early 1960s more than 20 percent of teachers, engineers, and doctors were from working-class backgrounds (Matejko, 1974:86).

The new socialist state's policy was to create new strata of enterprise administrators and technical experts from the working class and their children. Numerous political workers were immediately promoted to administrative positions, and the shift of manual workers to managerial positions was accelerated after the 1948 consolidation of power by the United Workers' Party. The previous class of factory administrators mostly either left with the Germans, had been eliminated by them, or, in the case of the survivors, after nationalization were not considered reliable.

In 1955-65 approximately two-thirds of all directors of Polish industrial enterprises were of working-class backgrounds, 22 percent were of peasant backgrounds, and 11 percent were from the intelligentsia (Kostecki, 1977:85). In 1955 only 27 percent of executive directors had a university education. In contrast, by 1971, 70 percent of executive directors of enterprises had a university education (Kostecki, 1977:87).

In 1968, 39 percent of technical specialists had manual working-class fathers, 29 percent had peasant fathers, and 29 percent had nonmanual employee fathers (Zagorski, 1976:9). In 1972, 30 percent of all those in managerial and technical positions had unskilled manual-worker fathers, 10 percent had fathers who were craftsmen, and 22 percent had peasant fathers (Walsilewski, 1978:101).

In pre-World War II Poland there was tremendous income inequality. Socialist Poland, in contrast, has followed radical egalitarian income policies. In the 1920s an upper-middle-class professional had an income five times that of the average urban worker and 20



times that of a poor peasant (Matejko, 1974:60, 61, 87). In 1937 the ratio of professional and white-collar workers' salaries to wages was 2.8 to 1, while for equivalent occupations in 1970 it was 1.2 to 1. The early years of the consolidated socialist regime saw an enhancing of income equality. While in 1950 a member of the technical intelligentsia earned, on average, 1.80 times the income of a manual worker, by 1953 that figure was 1.56 times a worker's wage—a cause of discontent among the younger intelligentsia (Lane and Kolkiewicz, 1973:95).

In 1972 the average disposable household income per year for all professionals and managers was 1.26 times the national average, while that of skilled workers was .99 and that of unskilled workers .77—that is, the ratio of the family income of professionals and managers to that of unskilled workers was 1.63. In comparison, in Finland, whose social structure before the 1917 Russian Revolution was similar to that of Poland, professionals and managers earned 2.32 times the national average while unskilled workers earned only .63 (a gap of 3.69 times) (Allardt and Wesolowski, 1978:127). Polish miners in 1970–71 earned the same as university professors and doctors. Workers in construction and steel are also highly paid. Their pay, although 75 percent that of miners, professors, and medical doctors, was equivalent to that of TV journalists, newspaper editors, and secondary school teachers (Matejko, 1974:93–94).

In general, income distribution in Poland is highly egalitarian compared with the West and, especially, with the pre-World War II regime. In 1975 the highest income decile in Poland received 20.1 percent, and the highest-paid 20 percent, 34.3 percent of total disposable household income. In comparison, in Finland in 1971 the highest decile received 32.9 percent, and the highest-paid 20 percent, 48.8 percent. The poorest 20 percent received 10 percent of total income in Poland but only 5.2 percent in Finland—rather strong contrasts (Allardt and Wesolowski, 1978:250). In Poland in 1975 there was a correlation for the urban population of .23 between education and income, and also between occupation and income. The comparable figures for Finland in 1972 were .42 and .51 (Allardt and Wesolowski, 1978:127). Clearly, Polish society is radically more egalitarian than is Finland, or the rest of Western Europe, with the working class being in an especially favorable position.

The wages of manual workers demonstrated a tendency to rise in relation to both engineering personnel and all office workers after 1960. In 1965 manual workers earned 62 percent as much as engi-

neering personnel and 93 percent as much as all office workers, including administrators. By 1974 manual workers averaged 71 percent as much as engineering personnel and 103 percent as much as office workers. Clearly there was a relative improvement in the position of manual workers (Jarosinska and Kulpinski, 1978:187).

Solidarity consistently attacked what it saw as unfair and hypocritical privileges of the top Party and state officials. It sponsored exposés of leading Party officials who had bought and renovated pre-war mansions or built their own dachas. The Minister of Building and Building Materials, who was shown to have built a \$500,000, four-story dacha, was fired and expelled from the Central Committee of the Party. Party officials were also attacked for other privileges, such as special country retreats. One exposé revealed that the government maintained a hunting lodge for top officials and their foreign guests that cost \$500,000. According to one Party member, "Gierek genuinely thought the ruling party should have some of these luxuries. He believed that life was getting better for the people, so why not for the party? He loved to invite Giscard to a private lodge for boar hunting, and when he went to France on a state visit, and stayed at Marie Antoinette's cottage, it turned his head. He thought of all these things as status symbols for the country" (see *New York Times*, February 4, 1981; February 15, 1981:sec. 4).

Out of fairness to the "privileged party elite," it must be pointed out that the fancy houses and vacation homes that many of them were found to have were similar to the houses and vacation homes of the upper middle class in the capitalist countries, and are qualitatively more humble than the mansions and vacation homes of the truly wealthy. (See Crabanski, 1983, for an attempt to document the "privileges" of the Party "elite." In fact this study shows the petty nature of the privileges of this group—that is, the qualitatively more egalitarian nature of Polish society compared with that of capitalist countries.)

Egalitarian attitudes are strong among Polish workers. In 1958, 54 percent of all workers supported the idea of relatively equal incomes for all citizens, compared with only 20 percent of all engineers (Malewski, 1977:19). While only 8 percent of workers stated that they were opposed to relatively equal incomes, this was true of fully 55 percent of engineers. In response to the question "Should the difference between the highest and lowest wages be limited in our country?" 40 percent of engineers answered "should be unlimited," compared with only 5 percent of workers (Malewski, 1977:20). In 1975,



44 percent of all unskilled workers and 53 percent of all skilled workers, compared with 38 percent of the intelligentsia, stated that they wanted "to see the social differences in Poland entirely disappear" (Nowak 1981:50). Sociological surveys in early 1981 found that 90 percent of Poles considered equality and justice the most important of all social values (above law and order or the freedom to express opinions) (Kurczewski 1981:25).

A summary of attitude surveys by Polish sociologists, reported in the *Scientific American* in 1981, concluded:

Our surveys in the late 1950s and early 1960s showed that "the experiment in social learning on a national scale" conducted by the new regime had succeeded to a certain degree. The great changes in the social and economic organization of the society—the nationalization of industry, land reform, economic planning, the abolition of the pre-war class structure—were accepted by the people. In reflection of the strong propagation of egalitarian ideology in those formative years the people also embraced the idea of equality of life opportunity for all citizens and even the idea of preferential opportunity for the underdog. Their egalitarianism was more moderate when it came to the distribution of income; the majority accepted some inequality. What the people held to be a morally acceptable spread between the top and the bottom, however, would seem fairly radical by the standards of Western Europe. Indeed, the majority held that there was not enough equality in the social stratification of socialist Poland. Most people also shared in the fairly strong conviction that society as a whole and the state in particular are responsible for the equalization of life opportunities and for the development of the potential of all citizens as well as for the satisfaction of people's basic needs. (Nowak, 1981:49)

The strong egalitarian ideology of the Poles is reflected in the fact that in early 1981, 85 percent of Poles (92 percent of Party members, 84 percent of non-Party members) were found to see significant or very significant social inequities in Polish society. (Inequities here refer primarily to the perceived privileges of those in high government and enterprise positions.) Such inequities were significantly more likely to be noted by white-collar workers and the intelligentsia than by manual workers or peasants. This is a reversal of the situation around 1960, when it was more likely to be the workers, rather than the intelligentsia, who pointed to social inequities (Kurczewski, 1981:25). Eighty-six percent of the population thought that dispari-

ties in income were "flagrant," 47 percent thought the rank-and-file workers were underprivileged compared with management staff, and 61 percent thought it was wrong for high office to be associated with privileges and advocated reduction in incomes and restrictions on privileged access to goods in short supply. It is clear that "Surveys demonstrate that one of the sources of the crisis of public confidence in the authorities was a painful sense of inequality and strong conviction of social injustice" (Kurczewski, 1981:26).

The discontent periodically expressed by the Polish working class is neither an expression of discontent with socialism nor a manifestation of the system's economic failures. Quite the contrary: the tremendous economic success of Polish socialism until 1978 created feelings of a high level of entitlements, as well as an expectation of continued rapid improvement in conditions, especially among the younger generation. As the generation that has no memories of capitalism, the hardships of World War II, or the period of reconstruction became the majority in the Polish working class, the legitimacy of the Party became increasingly based on what it could do for workers today, not what it had done in the past. To quote a leading authority:

It would be a great mistake not to appreciate what Polish blue-collar workers have gained in People's Poland, though these gains are due not so much to the Communist political system as to the intensive industrialization of the country. The main difference between the younger and older generations of blue-collar workers is that the former value these achievements less and less, taking them for granted and desiring more. Thus, it will be continually more difficult for the government to retain good relationships with the blue-collar workers without deciding on very basic reforms.

...

The wage-earning workers expect better treatment, higher wages, and better opportunities for their children. The prospect of social advancement, opened within the Communist system, was at first very attractive; but with the passing of time the new rights have come to be viewed by blue-collar workers less as privileges and more as self-evident facts of their daily life. (Matejko, 1974:110, 114)

Everyone who has seriously studied the question, even the most anti-Communist of institutions such as the U.S. Army and Radio Free Europe, has concluded that socialism is legitimate among the



vast majority of Polish people, above all in the working class. Most Poles genuinely support the public ownership and social control of large and medium-size enterprises and the advanced system of socialized public services distributed largely on the basis of need (see, for example, U.S. Army, 1973:167; Radio Free Europe, 1963:191).

Very few Poles support private ownership of big industry. In 1958 only 8 percent supported "the admission of private property to big industry" (Malewski, 1977:27). On the other hand, 20 percent of Poles supported allowing private property in big agricultural units, a figure that varied little by occupation (Malewski, 1977:28). In 1978 only 2 percent of Warsaw University students supported the private ownership of heavy industry (compared with 5 percent in 1958), while 13 percent supported private ownership of medium-size industrial enterprises (compared with 25 percent in 1958). On the other hand, a majority in both years supported private ownership of small industrial enterprises: 53 percent in 1978 and 62 percent in 1958 (Nowak, 1981:51).

A sociological survey of undergraduates at Warsaw University in 1978 found that 66 percent "would like to see the world moving in the direction of some form of socialism," in contrast with only 9 percent who did not (Nowak, 1981:51). These figures were essentially unchanged since 1958. Another survey of Warsaw students done in 1961 found that of those having opinions, 70 percent of those from working-class backgrounds and 77 percent of those from peasant backgrounds (in contrast with 53 percent of those from higher-level intelligentsia backgrounds) had an essentially positive evaluation of the social and political developments of the 1945-55 period in Poland. The same study found that of those having an opinion (leaving out those who answered "don't know"), 39 percent of students from working-class backgrounds considered themselves Marxists, compared with 38 percent of those from peasant backgrounds and 19 percent of those from higher-level intelligentsia backgrounds. In general, the higher one's social background, the less supportive of socialism, Marxism, and the Party's leadership (Pirages, 1972:94).

In 1958 a sociological survey was taken of attitudes toward workers' councils. People were given the choice of agreeing that councils ought to be the "real ruler of the factory," "ought to be only a consultative body," or were "unnecessary at all." Fifty percent of workers agreed that they should be "the real rulers of the factory," compared with 54 percent of the technicians and 35 percent of the engineers (Malewski, 1977:27). This indicates the role that techni-

cians were in fact playing as leaders of the workers' councils, as well as the reluctance of the higher-level technical experts to submit themselves to the workers' direction.

In conclusion, with the exception of certain segments of the Church and intelligentsia, and a few formerly wealthy from the pre-war period, virtually everyone in Poland is a socialist of some type. Mass struggles in Poland are thus, at least on the surface, struggles about different models of socialism, not contests between explicitly pro- and antisocialist forces. The objective effects of various movements and policies, however, are another matter.



## Social Forces in Poland

### —4—

#### Agriculture and the Peasant Question

Polish agriculture in the interwar period was largely in the hands of wealthy landowners. In 1931, 44 percent of all agricultural land and the overwhelming share of commercial agricultural production were concentrated in large estates. Meanwhile, the majority of landowning peasants held dwarf holdings (less than five hectares). Between the early 1920s and the late 1930s the percentage of all holdings that were less than five hectares increased from 59 percent to 67 percent of the total. Between half and two-thirds of landowning peasants did not have sufficient resources to provide themselves with a reasonable standard of living. Only about half of Polish landowning peasants owned their own horses. The contrast between the mass of landless and dwarf peasants and the large-estate-owning aristocracy was immense (Matejko, 1974:68, 69).

Poland experienced a radical land reform in 1944-45, with the large estates that had dominated commercial production taken over by the landless and dwarf peasants. The National Council of Poland issued its radical land redistribution decree from Lublin in September 1944, a decree effected behind the advance of the Red Army as peasants took the initiative in seizing the land. The Polish land reform not only divided up the big estates but also took land away from rich peasants. In most places the division was carried out by local committees of peasants only nominally subject to the authority of the new government. The process of land reform continued through 1947.

As a result of the radical land reform, in 1950 only 4.2 percent of all farms, encompassing 16 percent of the agricultural area, were over 15 hectares. The majority of the resultant holdings, however, were too small to be self-sustaining, never mind efficient. In 1950, 57.2 percent of all holdings were less than five hectares. The majority of the land (61.1 percent) was in units of 5 to 15 hectares (held by 38.6 percent of all landholders) (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:Appendix, table 3). Over time, the average size of farms has become smaller in contrast with virtually all other industrial countries. By 1968 only 10 percent of all farms had over 10 hectares (compared with 12 percent in 1950). While 16.0 percent of the agricultural land was in units of over 15 hectares in 1950, this figure slipped to 12.4 percent by 1960. On the other end of the spectrum, dwarf holdings also increased; in 1968, 67.1 percent of all holdings were of less than five hectares. The percentage of total agricultural land in units of less than five hectares increased from 25.9 percent in 1950 to 28.0 percent in 1970 (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:330). The average size of the 3.4 million private farms in 1970 was about 5 hectares (12 acres). In 1981 it was estimated at only seven acres (*New York Times*, October 10, 1981). The trend toward smaller farms in Poland only aggravates the problems of inefficient cultivation and makes it all the more difficult to introduce modern technology (see U.S. Army, 1973:236).

The inefficiency of Polish agriculture is manifested by the fact that as late as 1979, it still took approximately one peasant to feed two urban dwellers, compared with the United States, where one farmer fed 50 people, or East Germany and Czechoslovakia, where one farmer fed 10 people. In 1979, 31 percent of the Polish labor force was employed in agriculture, compared with an average of 17 percent for all of the Eastern European nonmarket economies. In 1960–79 Poland reduced the percentage of its population employed in agriculture from 48 percent to 31 percent of the total, a very slow rate of decline compared with the equivalent figures for the USSR of 42 percent to 14 percent; Hungary, 38 percent to 15 percent; Czechoslovakia, 26 percent to 11 percent; and even Yugoslavia—which allowed the free market to operate, rather than heavily subsidizing peasant producers—where the decline was from 63 percent to 31 percent. Clearly, collective agriculture is much more efficient than small peasant production. Polish agriculture is also much more inefficient than that of capitalist countries at similar levels of industrial development. Only 11 percent of Italy's and 15 percent of Spain's



labor force in 1979 was in agriculture. The backwardness of Polish agriculture is also revealed in the trends in agricultural production. Taking 1961–65 as the base, gross agricultural production in Poland had increased by 38 percent by 1976, compared with 51 percent in Yugoslavia (which had relatively little state subsidy of its private agriculture) and 91 percent in Romania, 56 percent in Bulgaria, and 40 percent in Hungary—all of which had collectivized agriculture (Simon and Kanet, 1981:286).

Understanding the productivity problems with individual land ownership, in 1949 the new socialist regime began actively encouraging the small-holding peasants to form cooperative farms so as to be able to utilize modern agricultural techniques, thus better feeding the cities while obtaining a higher living standard for themselves.

The state erected an incentive structure to encourage the growth of more efficient, large-scale collective farming. On the one hand, it put pressures on individual farmers, such as prohibiting them from hiring nonfamily members and setting high delivery quotas at low prices. On the other hand, cooperative farmers were given preference in the provision of fertilizers and other necessary inputs by the state. Fees for the use of state-owned tractors were considerably less for cooperative farmers, as were the taxes on their land. Further, the new cooperative farms were given direct state subsidies (see Dziewanowski, 1976:232).

By 1956, however, only 8.5 percent of the total agricultural area had been organized into cooperatives. As a result of the 1956 events, the Party changed its position on collectivization, endorsing private ownership of farms and ending the collectivization drive. As a result, over 80 percent of the cooperative farms were dissolved, leaving a total of only 1.2 percent of the agricultural area in collectives.

The state nevertheless continued to play a strong role in agriculture as both supplier and distributor. In the early 1970s the state procurement agencies distributed about 80 percent of the output of Polish agriculture, in good measure secured through required deliveries at a set price. In 1972 the system of delivery quotas for meat, grain, and potatoes was abolished. The state, however, continued to pressure peasants to sell a minimum of 15,000 zlotys worth of food to the state, under threat of being turned off the land for substandard husbandry (*New York Times*, October 10, 1981).

This differential continued through the 1970s. While in 1970, 14.9 percent of all agricultural production was accounted for by socialized farms (collectives and state farms), in 1977, 22.1 percent was

(Simon and Kanet, 1981:273). The sown area controlled by the state meanwhile increased from 15.9 percent to 21.9 percent of the total between 1970 and 1977 (Simanis, 1983:16). In some vital commodities the socialized sector accounted for a disproportionate share. For example, its share of total meat production increased from 16.3 percent to 33.7 percent between 1970 and 1977 (Simon and Kanet, 1981:273). Corresponding to the greater efficiency of Polish collective farms is the 20 percent higher standard of living of collective farmers compared with individual farmers, in good part made possible by their ability to utilize modern technology such as tractors (Matejko, 1974:79).

The state did not give up on socialized agricultural production altogether, however. In 1962 it adopted a policy of encouraging older peasants to transfer their land to the state in return for a lifetime pension. Under this system, which was made more attractive in 1968, retiring peasants who met certain conditions could retain their house, farm buildings, and a small garden plot. While some of the land thus acquired was sold or leased to younger, more efficient farmers, the bulk of it was transferred to state farms (Simanis, 1983:15-16). The state also encouraged socialized agriculture by its investment policies. While in 1970, 10.4 percent of all Polish investment was in the socialized agricultural sector and 5.6 percent in the private sector, by 1977 investment in the socialized sector had grown to 12.0 percent while investment in the private sector was 4.3 percent (Simon and Kanet, 1981:287). In 1977, 52 percent of all tractors were in the socialized sector (Simon and Kanet, 1981:273).

In 1971 collective farms accounted for about 2 percent of all agricultural production, while state farms, mostly in the new western territories, produced almost ten times as much (Matejko, 1974:79). It should be noted that although the collective sector was tiny, the rate of growth in its output between 1960 and 1971 was 130 percent, compared with a rate of growth of only 36 percent on private farms.

Poland and Yugoslavia alone among the socialist countries have never collectivized agriculture. In fact, since 1956, instead of providing significant material incentives for collective farmers and disincentives for individual farming, the Polish state has increasingly subsidized the inefficient small agricultural producers. The funds used by the state to buy peasant products at above what the peasants could obtain in a free market, in order to sell them at extremely low prices to the urban population, rose steadily until 1980, when Po-



land's Western creditors insisted on the reduction in the price differential. In 1977 the state food subsidy amounted to 70 percent of the retail price. During the 1970s other benefits were granted to the private peasants: in 1972 the higher end of the land tax scale for private farmers was reduced; there were upward adjustments in prices paid to farmers; and socialized health care services were extended to them (see U.S. Army, 1973:215, 243).

As a result of the generous support of the state, the traditional gap between the extreme poverty of the countryside and the cities has been radically reduced. By 1960 the average real income of the Polish peasant had reached 250 percent of its average interwar level (Matejko, 1974:70). Real farm income continued to increase during the 1960s and 1970s. In 1970-75 real farm income increased by about 28 percent per capita (Simon and Kanet, 1981:283).

Clearly, the heavy subsidy to inefficient Polish peasant producers has both greatly inhibited the movement of peasants to the cities and blocked the consolidation of their tiny plots into efficient, large-scale units able to use modern technology. The failure to collectivize agriculture has proved to be a serious obstacle to long-term economic growth.

The halfhearted attempts to socialize agriculture have produced results worse than either an all-out collectivization campaign carried through to a successful conclusion, such as happened in Hungary after the 1956 events, or a laissez-faire attitude to individual farmers, which would have forced consolidation by the operation of markets, as has more or less been the case in Yugoslavia. The peasantry, in spite of the tremendously high level of economic subsidy, largely remains skeptical of state policies and fearful that the state may attempt to force collectivization. This is, in good part, because of the occasional high pressure and mismanaged Party and state campaigns designed to increase efficiency. As a result, the growth of cooperation in the countryside is probably slower than it would be if the state had never pressed collectivization. The ideological commitment to small landholding is high.

It is important to note, however, that the majority of Polish peasants are not irretrievably wedded to the idea of individual farming. In a national survey done in 1969 and 1970, 23 percent of farmers responded to a question about what should be done with their land when they could no longer work it by mentioning the possibility of renting it to the state. Sixty percent accepted the idea of

cooperating closely with an external agency in running their farms, instead of depending only on their own ability and experience. Other studies have shown that the number of farmers "committed to the continuation of private farming diminished from about 50 percent to less than 20 percent," during the 1970s (Matejko, 1974:79).

The state's attempt to enhance its legitimacy among the peasants, as well as to coax them to increase production, has largely failed. The tremendous sums spent on private agriculture by the state since 1956, and especially since 1970, have thus largely been without either ideological or economic result.

### The Intelligentsia

Although the intelligentsia materially fares little better than skilled manual workers, it has prospered in socialist Poland both because of the enormous material support given to culture and the arts, and because of economic security provided for cultural workers. Heavy state subsidies make books, sports, theater, films, concerts, and magazines very inexpensive and, thus, readily accessible. As a result of state support, the numbers of the cultural intelligentsia have radically increased over the last generation.

In spite of the radical reduction in their traditionally superior position culturally and politically, this stratum remains distinct from the manual working class. In spite of the working-class or peasant origin of the majority (especially its administrative and technical segments), the presocialist traditions and attitudes of this stratum remain strong, this cultural and ideological differential probably being greater than in any socialist country.

The historical roots of the nationalist—or, better, national chauvinist—attitudes prevalent in much of the Polish intelligentsia, especially its cultural segments and among those whose parents were in the intelligentsia before the socialist transformation, lies in the position of this class in pre-1918 Poland. Of the pre-World War I intelligentsia (those born between 1760 and 1880) 60 percent were from the gentry and only 10 percent from the bourgeoisie. The Polish intelligentsia's historical orientation is consequently different from that of the intelligentsia of much of the rest of Slavic Central Europe—for instance, Bohemia, Serbia, Slovakia, Bulgaria—where the intelligentsia claimed to have its origin in the traditional peasantry, whose traditions it celebrated. Instead, in Poland it was the



traditions and life-style of the aristocracy that were celebrated. More than elsewhere, the traditional aristocratic distaste for manual work prevailed (Matejko, 1974:141-47).

With the czarist suppression of the Polish language and culture after the failed insurrection of 1863, the intelligentsia was forced to turn to the independent professions in order to avoid impoverishment (Matejko, 1974:141, 144; Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:153-54). In the face of intense competition from Jews, who were being forced out of their traditional caste positions as shop-keepers and money lenders by the forces of commercialization and growing restrictions imposed by the czar, anti-Semitism, a manifestation of competition for scarce privileged positions, became intense in this stratum (see Leon, 1950:chs. 5, 7; Pinson, 1946:145-72).

Before independence it was the intelligentsia, speaking for the Polish gentry that was its class basis, that kept the idea of "Poland" alive. It reproduced and developed the language and national culture, becoming the mainstay of national resistance. The suppression of the Polish language by the czar after 1863 intensified the nationalism of the cultural intelligentsia (artists, writers, scientists). Further, about 90 percent of the intelligentsia were Catholic, with all that meant during the period of suppression of the Church and attempts to force conversion to Russian Orthodoxy (Matejko, 1974:141, 144).

The strong traditional association of the pre-World War II intelligentsia with the landed aristocracy, together with both groups' intense Polish nationalism inflamed by 120 years of subordination to a people and culture they regarded with contempt, shaped the attitudes of this stratum toward all things Russian. For hundreds of years the Polish landlords had been in competition with the Russian state for hegemony over Eastern Europe. It was not so much that Poland ended up a colony; becoming a French or an Austrian colony wouldn't have been nearly as grating. But to have been subordinated by culturally backward and inferior "Asiatic" barbarians was intolerable (see Matejko, 1974:219).

The decimation of the pre-World War II intelligentsia by the Nazis, the discrediting of its more conservative segments by their association with the interwar regime, the prestige of being associated with the radical transformation of Polish society, the direct repression of the most rightist manifestations, and the fact that a new intelligentsia was rapidly being created out of the children of workers and peasants (who were being taught Marxist values) meant that, in the



decade after World War II, the traditional elitist national chauvinism of the intelligentsia was largely latent.

Although predominant before World War II, the traditional Catholic and national chauvinist traditions of the cultural intelligentsia in Poland were by no means universal. A considerable leftist tradition emerged in the generation before World War I and was consolidated in the interwar period (see Matejko, 1974:144). A major anticlerical tradition also became important between the wars. There was in fact considerable resentment among large sections of the intelligentsia against the domination of Poland by the conservative military, Church, and landed hierarchy, especially after the Pilsudski coup of 1926 (see Ascherson, 1981:69).

As a result of the discrediting of the traditional intelligentsia, as well as the massacre of a good part of it by the Nazis, the intelligentsia that emerged immediately after the war was mostly young, leftist, and motivated by idealism. A great many in and outside of the two major working-class parties became enthusiasts of socialist construction (see Ascherson, 1981:69).

However, after the 1956 events, the traditional intelligentsia increasingly asserted itself. After 1959 friendly contacts between the regime and leading writers became less frequent, as the cultural intelligentsia became increasingly cynical about Polish socialism and the regime became less responsive to its demands. In 1963 the Party called a Central Committee plenum in order to discuss the lack of support among the cultural intelligentsia for Party policy. The Party's leader, Gomulka, chastised the intelligentsia for its "escape from themes connected with the construction of socialism," as well as for its pessimism. In turn, leading writers and scholars began protesting what they saw as growing restrictions on book publication, advocating instead greater cultural diversity (Lane and Kolaniewicz, 1973:172).

In February 1968 the growing alienation of the cultural establishment from the Party culminated in an official ban on a classical Polish nationalist play, Adam Mickiewicz's *The Forefathers' Eve*, which contained a number of moving anti-Russian (albeit anti-tsarist) passages. This ban resulted in student demonstrations, police actions against the demonstrators, and the March events (student protest meetings, sit-ins, and demonstrations).

Student demands in the March demonstrations called for liberalization within socialism. While demanding an end to censorship and more academic freedom, they also explicitly insisted on reaf-



firming socialism and its values—in sharp contrast with the Solidarity movement of 1980–81, which scrupulously avoided explicit references to “socialism.” The students appealed to industrial workers to join in their demonstrations, sending carefully worded socialist messages to the factories. However, their appeals won no support and the student movement fizzled without gaining influence outside of the intelligentsia. In fact, a number of workers were mobilized to drive the student demonstrations off the Warsaw University campus (see Ascherson, 1981:94).

But the 1968 events marked a watershed in Party-cultural intelligentsia relations. Since that time the norm among the masses of the cultural intelligentsia has been to be anti-Party and cynical about the institutions of Polish socialism (see Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:173–76). Disillusioned with Party policy because it didn’t provide them with special material privileges, because it pressured them to maintain a socialist orientation when they preferred individual artistic freedom, and because they took heavily state-subsidized and -guaranteed salaries for granted, adoption of the available traditional intelligentsia culture became all the more attractive.

The March 1968 events marked not only a break between the mainstream of the intelligentsia and Marxism, but also the beginning of the reconciliation between conservative Polish nationalism and Catholicism—links that were consolidated during the 1970s and emerged full-blown in 1980–81 (see Ascherson, 1981:95).

In the postwar decade, both out of necessity and as a matter of state policy, manual workers with socialist political backgrounds were promoted to fill most administrative positions in industrial enterprises. In 1946, 23 percent of all enterprise directors were from the working class and 39 percent from the intelligentsia. By 1949, 54 percent were from the working class and only 17 percent from the intelligentsia. By 1956, 76 percent of all enterprise directors were from the working class, only 8 percent had their social origins in the intelligentsia, and another 16 percent were from peasant families. In 1964, 66 percent of enterprise directors came from working-class families, and in most cases were once manual laborers themselves; 24 percent came from peasant families; and only 10 percent had parents who were anything other than manual workers or peasants (see Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:335).

The working-class administrators promoted directly from the bench to all levels of management were mostly activists in the Communist and Socialist parties chosen for their general leadership abili-

ties and political commitment more than for any technical expertise in running industry. In 1946, 35 percent of enterprise directors about whom information is known were members of the Polish Workers' Party and 21 percent were members of the Polish Socialist Party. In 1948, 75 percent were members of one party or the other. In 1950, 90 percent were members of the Polish United Workers' Party\* (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:334).

Over time, Party membership came to reflect both the need for political control over enterprise managers—that is, economic administrators must be politically loyal and held accountable by their Party branch—and the careerism of the new technically trained managers, who largely joined the Party in order to advance their careers rather than out of political enthusiasm.

The massive increase in professional and technical education in postwar Poland resulted in a transformation of the technical requirements for industrial management positions. The younger engineers and administrative personnel who had entered the labor force after receiving an education soon developed an antagonistic relationship with the older generation of manual workers promoted from the bench to top administrative positions on political grounds. This conflict became important in the mid-1950s, when significant numbers of technically trained engineers and administrative personnel were in place. "Red versus expert" became the axis of struggle. The new technical intelligentsia created out of the working class and peasantry by higher educational institutions was not slow to criticize the technical and organizational failures of their supervisors. The young technical personnel pressed for more say in the running of the enterprises—against the older working-class administrators, the central planning agencies, and the manual workers in the plants—on the ground of their technical expertise. They sought the "professionalization" of management and a reduced role of the Party in the economy. The demand for the "professionalization" of administration and for an increased role for science and technique was a demand to reduce the role of the Party, which had put the older "promoted" technical and administrative intelligentsia in place (see Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:189–205, 307; Matejko, 1974:163).

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\*Leading Party officials have class backgrounds similar to those of enterprise directors. Most of those in "power elite" positions in Polish society are either former manual workers or have working-class backgrounds (Matejko, 1974:110).



In good part the struggle between the more politically motivated former workers and the technically trained younger intelligentsia took place within the Party committees of the enterprises. The young technical intelligentsia, in good part of working-class and peasant background, joined the Party in large numbers, mainly out of a desire to influence events, rather than out of either cynical careerism or political idealism. In 1963, 32 percent of all engineers were Party members, and in 1967, 40 percent. In comparison, about 9 percent of skilled manual workers and 4 percent of the unskilled were Party members; in most industries the overwhelming majority of manual workers who are in the Party are skilled. In 1969, 13 percent of all Party members were engineers, technicians, or technical supervisory staff, compared with 8 percent in 1960. During the 1960s workers averaged about 40 percent of Party members and roughly 60 percent of recruits, while peasants averaged 11 percent of membership. The disparity between the workers' share in recruitment and their share in membership is largely due to the promotion of Party workers to administrative positions (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:141, 206; Matejko, 1974:110; Pirages, 1972:239; and Dziekanowski, 1976:325).

Under pressure from the young technical intelligentsia, in 1956 the Party began to relieve many of the worker-directors, replacing them with technically better qualified and generally politically reliable younger people. Many of the older "promoted" administrators went back to school to receive a technical education and were eventually reassigned to administrative positions. Others simply returned to the bench that they had never been especially enthusiastic about leaving (see Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:193). The technical intelligentsia further benefited from the reforms that occurred in 1956 by being granted the greater pay differentials they had demanded, as well as by having their power and status within the enterprises increased (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:308).

By the 1970s virtually all leading administrative personnel in industrial enterprises had technical training, usually in engineering. Two types can be distinguished. On the one hand are those who have an authentic commitment to socialist ideas and who for the most part believe in the Party; they are mostly from working-class and peasant backgrounds. They often have gained their degrees through part-time study and have had considerable manual working-class experience. These engineer-managers tend to value political commitment,

social responsibility, expertise, and autonomy. While they tend not to question the socialist goals of production, they tend to come into conflict with the central planning bodies and higher-level Party officials on the issue of how much autonomy the enterprises ought to have—that is, how much authority their stratum ought to have to guide the economy (see Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:308; U.S. Army, 1973:61).

On the other hand are the engineer-managers who have been described as oriented to the “ethos of science,” which “emphasizes the extension of certified knowledge, impersonal criteria, social collaboration, disinterestedness and organized skepticism.” They tend more to be from nonmanual social backgrounds, to have received their degrees from a full-time institution of higher education, and to have little manual work experience. They gravitate to nonsupervisory managerial jobs, and if they join the Party at all, they tend to do so for careerist or other instrumental reasons, rather than out of a commitment to the socialist project (see Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:308).

The elitism of the intelligentsia is reflected in its attitudes toward egalitarianism. The idea of narrowing the income gap is less attractive to its members than to workers. A sociological survey done in 1961 found that 53 percent of skilled workers supported the total elimination of social inequality, compared with 38 percent of the free professionals and creative intelligentsia (see Matejko, 1974:151).

Polytechnic (specialized technical) education tends to generate skepticism toward socialism among students from working-class and peasant backgrounds, and also implants elitist aspirations. In contrast, university education tends to reaffirm the original egalitarian, as well as socialist, commitments of working-class and peasant children, even while generating cynicism about the role of the Party and the alleged disparity between its theory and its practice. A study done in 1961 found that only 26 percent of university students from working-class families and 24 percent of those from peasant families were “extremely nonegalitarian” in their values. This is in sharp contrast with both university students with intelligentsia backgrounds, 48 percent of whom were extremely nonegalitarian, and with working-class and peasant students in institutes of purely technical education, of whom 70 percent and 56 percent, respectively, held extremely nonegalitarian values. The proportion of students who are extremely nonegalitarian declines over the course of university edu-



cation—from 43 percent for first- and second-year students to 38 percent for students in their last three years—while it increases at the polytechnics from 50 percent to 67 percent. The exposure to the career possibilities (upward mobility) of the more practically and materially oriented working-class and peasant students in the polytechnics seems to generate both elitism and cynicism about the socialist project (see Pirages, 1972:95–96).

Sociological studies have shown that large numbers of upwardly mobile recruits into the intelligentsia rapidly adopt many of the traditional values of this stratum, especially its traditional nationalism (see Matejko, 1974:147). One analyst has suggested that acculturation into the traditional values of the petty bourgeoisie serves as a substitute for the fact that that stratum has little material advantage over the working class. Generally neglected in the distribution of material rewards in socialist Poland, it resents the lack of privilege traditionally associated with educational and professional position. This resentment, at first based only in a general feeling that the educated ought to have a better material life-style than “common laborers,” can easily be transformed into a specific resentment against the regime articulated through the nationalist traditions of the petty bourgeoisie (see, for example, Matejko, 1974:145, 147; Pirages, 1972:239).

The level of tolerance of diverse and even anti-Marxist ideas in Poland has since 1956 been the highest of any socialist country. Polish society has for some time had what has been described as a “vibrant civil society” with a fairly wide range of political, cultural, and social ideas publicly debated in the media. The level of political debate and diversity widened considerably after August 1980 (until December 1981), when almost everything short of advocating the overthrow of the government and explicit attacks on the Soviet Union was tolerated—and even the latter two officially forbidden topics were put forth on many occasions, with little action taken. Most Western periodicals have been easily available in Poland for some time; Polish border guards have mostly been concerned about anti-government émigré publications in Polish. Since 1956 everything that was not explicitly anti-Communist was publishable in journals and books. Similarly, most Western films and plays were imported (see Bethell, 1969:238).

Although political dissidents were sometimes harassed by use of the law that stipulates that people can be picked up and detained

without charges for 48 hours, between 1956 and the declaration of martial law in December 1981 there were few political prisoners in Poland. According to the U.S. Department of State's *Country Report on Human Rights Practices*, "There are approximately 200,000 prisoners in Polish prisons as of October 1980. Almost all of these have been jailed on criminal rather than political charges. . . . There is no evidence that persons are abducted, secretly arrested or held in clandestine detention in Poland. People have been arrested and held by the police for questioning without being allowed to notify their families or to obtain legal counsel. These periods of detention are usually no longer than 48 hours" (U.S. Dept. of State, 1981:851-9). Torture or physical mistreatment of political dissidents is extremely rare. Again to quote the U.S. Department of State: "Torture is prohibited by Articles 155-157 of the Polish penal code. There was one report in 1980 of torture at a local police (citizen's militia) station. The information purports to be first hand, but cannot be confirmed. There have been reports that persons arrested on other than political charges have been beaten to obtain confessions" (U.S. Department of State, 1981:852). The treatment of dissidents in Poland, as well as the allowable limits of public discussion and disagreement, are radically more liberal than in most U.S. client states of Latin America or East Asia—the contrast with countries such as El Salvador and Guatemala, where those suspected of opposing the government are routinely shot without trial, is qualitative.

Since the beginning of the Gomulka regime in 1956, it has been easy for Poles to travel overseas. According to the U.S. Department of State, "Poland is quite liberal in the issuance of passports for tourist travel. Over 30,000 Poles traveled to the United States during the last twelve months and several hundred thousand visited Western European countries" (U.S. Department of State, 1981:857).

There are no restrictions on religious practice, although the state has tried to minimize the political role of the Catholic Church—for a time it was reluctant to encourage the construction of new churches, and in 1961 it prohibited religious instruction in state schools—but there has never been any interference in the practice of religion. In reference to the minor religions, the U.S. Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* stated: "Poland's small Protestant sects are allowed to operate without any major government obstruction. The small Jewish minority bolstered by the presence of a rabbi, manages to maintain its traditions. The government



has permitted emigration to Israel, the Warsaw Synagogue has been renovated and action has been promised to restore Jewish cemeteries in Poland" (U.S. Department of State, 1981:857).

## The Catholic Church

The Catholic Church is an extremely important institution in Poland. Almost 90 percent of the population is nominally Catholic, about 80 percent of children receive religious instruction, and a higher proportion of the population actively practices than in any other country in the world (with the possible exception of Ireland). There are about 16,000 priests (about twice as many as before World War II) and 14,000 churches (which, unique for a socialist country, are full of young people) (see *Wall Street Journal*, December 15, 1981; Dobbs et al., 1981:46). There are even Catholic chaplains in the Polish armed forces. The basis of Polish Catholicism is the peasantry. In the countryside religious beliefs, many of which would today be considered reactionary and dogmatic by the Vatican, are very strong (see Bethell, 1969:248). The large-scale migration of youth from the rural areas to the rapidly growing industrial cities since World War II has brought Catholicism into what had largely been an anticlerical working class.

The Church hierarchy has long been especially conservative and anti-Communist, although after 1956 it reached a certain *modus vivendi* with the regime. As such it has served as an alternative ideological center to the Party. The situation of the Church in Poland contrasts sharply with that in Hungary and, especially, Czechoslovakia, countries where the majority of the population was also traditionally Catholic. While the Church has some influence in Hungary, it is not an important force in Czechoslovakia. The strength of Catholicism in Poland must be attributed to the traditional role of the Church as an ideological center during the 123 years of occupation by non-Catholic Germany and Russia. The Polish Church, like the Irish, gained its strength as the central institution that resisted, however passively, domination by an occupying power that was trying to suppress not only the local language and culture, but also the religion. The situation with the Czechoslovak Church is in strong contrast. First, Czechoslovakia was occupied by two Catholic powers—Bohemia by Austria and Slovakia by Hungary—both of which were

relatively tolerant of the local culture. The Czech intelligentsia looked to Russia as a protector and potential liberator throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, whereas the Polish intelligentsia and aristocracy saw the "inferior" Russians as their competitors for domination in the Slavic world. Last, the Czech working class was highly developed and, like most European working classes, became largely de-Christianized before 1948.

Other factors that have contributed to the strong influence of conservative Catholicism in Poland were the absence of a strong anticlerical movement which forced the separation of Church and state before the socialist revolution; the expropriation of the extensive Church estates by the revolution; and the exceptionally large peasantry, whose backward agricultural practices have been championed by the Church.

During the Russian occupation before 1915, the Church was closely identified with the survival of the Polish language and culture. The concordat with the Vatican in 1925 gave the Church extensive prerogatives, including the right to provide religious instruction in the state schools. There was no effective separation of Church and state in Poland before World War II. The situation in Poland was thus different from that in most of Western Europe, where the Church had either been officially separated from the state or its influence had been radically reduced. It was then incumbent on the new socialist regime to perform the anticlerical tasks undertaken in most other countries by the bourgeoisie at an earlier stage of historical development. It was not surprising that the Polish hierarchy did not easily become reconciled to its disestablishment by Marxists (see Ascherson, 1981:87).

Ironically, the state's expropriation of the Church's estates in the early 1950s removed a major source of antagonism between the Church hierarchy and the peasants, because the Church had profited handsomely from its exploitation of peasants on its estates. Relieved of its stake in maintaining exploitative large-scale agriculture, the Church could now credibly appear as the defender of the small landholder. In fact, the Church became the principal organized force opposing collectivization. Part of the *modus vivendi* worked out between the Party and Church after 1956 guaranteed the Church that there would be no collectivization and that it would be granted considerable freedom in the religious sphere, in exchange for which the Church would not overtly act to destabilize the regime



(see MacDonald, 1983:27; Ascherson, 1981:64). During Pope John Paul II's trip to Poland in the spring of 1983, the Vatican agreed to become a major source of credit for the Polish small holder.

In the absence of either collectivization or strong market pressures for the development of extensive, efficient private farming (because of heavy state subsidies to agriculture), the peasantry is much larger than in other countries at comparable levels of development. Thus, not only is the traditional basis of conservative Catholicism larger than elsewhere but the peasantry's Catholicism has been considerably strengthened by the Church's role as its champion. In fact, it might even be said that in some ways the small holder in contemporary Poland is as enthralled by the Church as was the French peasantry at an earlier time by Napoleon—and for similar reasons. The Church's influence has been carried over into the industrial proletariat—which was, in good part, anticlerical before World War II—by the extensive migration of the youth from the rural areas to the cities, especially into the rapidly growing industries in the new western territories, where the Solidarity movement was strongest in 1980 and 1981. Many industrial workers have continued to work small plots part-time, and even more live in rural areas, thus maintaining strong roots in the peasantry. In 1968, 10 percent of industrial workers were part-time peasants and 25 percent commuted daily from rural districts to their jobs in urban factories or the mines (Ascherson, 1981:136).

From 1944 to 1949 Communist Party policy encouraged a dialogue with the Catholic Church, promoting progressive tendencies within the Church which supported socialist reconstruction. The Party maintained that both it and the Church could gain from coexistence and from each other's experience. Numerous public discussions and debates were held, with Marxists and prominent Catholics participating. Leading Party members, including Party Secretary Boleslaw Bierut, attended religious services. Catholic publications were allowed to be printed, and numerous churches were reconstructed with state funds. Religious instruction remained part of the curriculum in state schools. Although many Church members were quite responsive to the Party's efforts, and progressive Catholic lay organizations were formed, the Church hierarchy remained hostile to any attempted synthesis of Marxism and Catholicism—it was decidedly not interested in anything like Latin American liberation theology (see Dziewanowski, 1976:242–43).

Throughout the period of the socialist transformation, the Church hierarchy remained extremely conservative and intransigent. It instructed all Catholics to vote for the pro-Western and anti-Communist Polish Peasants' Party in the elections of 1947. It persistently attacked the state for being dominated by "godless Communism" and "total dictatorship." Cardinal Wyszyński was fond of making such statements as "a systematic social organization has been set up to fight against God" and "an atheistic impertinence in our fatherland is grasping us by the throat." The Church attacked the state's provision of free contraceptives, arguing that it would result in the depopulation of Poland—Warsaw would become "an empty city where grass grew in the streets." The Party and state were attacked for undermining the family (see Ascherson, 1981:85).

The Church's traditional conservatism was manifested in the hierarchy's anti-Semitism and in its use of anti-Semitism to mobilize against the revolution. On July 4, 1946, what was probably the last classic pogrom in Eastern Europe took place in the Polish town of Kielce. A group of Soviet and Polish Jews on their way to Palestine was attacked and murdered by a mob. Rumors that the Jews were killing Christian children and drinking their blood had been circulating, and some were also fearful that Jews returning from the concentration camps and exile would reclaim their property. The Polish primate essentially justified this incident, arguing that it was more an expression of the people's outrage at the advance of Jewish-inspired godless Marxism than an act of racial bigotry. Cardinal Hlond (Wyszyński's predecessor) argued that the pogrom originated from "the presence in the government of Jews who were trying to establish in Poland a regime to which the majority of the people are hostile" (Ascherson, 1981:43).

Matters came to a head in July 1949, when the pope issued a decree excommunicating all Catholics who were either members of Communist parties or who supported them. The Polish government immediately denounced the Vatican's action as an "act of aggression against the Polish state," and announced that the Vatican decree would not be carried out on Polish territory. In August a law was passed that provided for prison sentences of up to five years for anyone refusing the sacraments to Polish citizens because of political beliefs or activities. At the same time the government announced its willingness to negotiate with the Church hierarchy (see Dziewanowski, 1976:243–44). The Party for the first time began a campaign



against the Church hierarchy while giving active support to "social Catholics" who supported a Catholic-Marxist alliance. The Church responded by attacking those progressive priests who were working with the government, issuing a pastoral letter from Archbishop Wyszyński criticizing the "spiritual poverty of materialism." The state responded to the increasing attacks from the Church hierarchy by encouraging strikes by workers on Church estates, nationalizing the principal Church charitable organization, and arresting about 500 priests for reactionary activities. In March 1950 the government nationalized all Church estates of over 250 acres, the Church's extensive land holdings not having been affected by the earlier land reform.

The crescendo of hostility between Church and Party was defused in April 1950, when an agreement between the hierarchy and the state was signed in which the hierarchy agreed to "oppose the misuse of religious feelings for antistate activity," to punish all clergy involved in antigovernment resistance groups, to teach the faithful to respect state authority, and to participate in the public mobilization for reconstruction and rapid industrialization. The Polish hierarchy also agreed to consider the pope the supreme authority only in "matters of faith and ecclesiastic jurisdiction," leaving social and political questions to be guided "by the Polish *raison d'état*" (Dziewanowski, 1976:246). For its part, the state agreed that Catholic organizations and publications would continue to function and that religious instruction would continue in the state schools. The Catholic charitable organization Caritas, but not its landed estates, were restored to the Church.

In 1952, at the height of the cold war (and the hot war in Korea) and while a rapid rearmament of West Germany by the United States was occurring, the Church was attacked for its reluctance to participate in criticism of the Western powers. In February 1953 the state issued a decree giving the government control of all appointments to Church posts, taking this authority out of the hands of the extremely anti-Communist Pope Pius XII in Rome (the Czech state, it should be noted, had long had this power). At the same time it became obligatory for priests and bishops to swear allegiance to People's Poland. Cardinal Wyszyński, the head of the hierarchy, responded by accusing the Party of making an "intolerable attempt" to suppress religion. He went on to encourage the Church to defend its prerogatives "even to the point of shedding blood." In response the

state (under the February decree) suspended Cardinal Wyszyński from his position and retired him, under house arrest, to a monastery. At the beginning of 1954 nine bishops and several hundred priests were being held in confinement (Dziewanowski, 1976: 249-51).

After the 1956 events Cardinal Wyszyński was freed from house arrest and restored to his position, and all other Church leaders were released. Church publications and organizations were permitted greater freedom, and a joint commission to mend Church-state relations was set up (Dziewanowski, 1976:279). In 1958 relations deteriorated once again, when the state issued a decree that members of religious orders who were giving religious instruction in the state schools had to be qualified as teachers, and that since the schools were state institutions, no religious emblems could be allowed in them. In 1959 the government removed the traditional exemption of clergy and Church institutions from taxation. And in 1961 religious instruction was removed from the basic curriculum of the state schools (the Church henceforth maintained its separate catechism centers) (Dziewanowski, 1976:295-96).

The extreme conservatism of the Church hierarchy has been manifested in Pope John Paul II's attitudes about theological and familial questions. He has been hostile to both liberation theology and liberal Catholic theologians, leaning fairly strongly in the direction of traditional positions. For example, on December 15, 1981, he issued a 175-page apostolic exhortation calling for the strict enforcement of the traditional Catholic doctrines on divorce, birth control, abortion, and the family. This document reasserted that the rhythm method is the only acceptable form of birth control and that state measures designed to encourage the practice of any other type of birth control were "anti-life." Also reaffirmed was the traditional Catholic practice of excommunicating any divorced persons who have remarried. The pope stated that divorced Catholics who had remarried, but who could not dissolve their second marriage because of responsibilities in bringing up children, could not be reinstated in the Church unless "they take on themselves the duty to live in complete continence, that is, by abstinence from the acts proper to married couples." The document also argued that while women should have the right to work outside of the home, "society must be structured in such a way that wives and mothers are not in practice compelled to work outside the home, and that their families can live and



prosper in a dignified way even when they themselves devote their full time to their own family" (*New York Times*, December 16, 1981). It could be confidently predicted that if the PUWP's leading role in Polish society were displaced by a predominantly Christian-oriented party advised by the Church, Polish family policy would become a replica of Ireland's: no abortion, no birth control except for medical reasons, no divorce, and the encouragement of the traditional division of labor between the sexes, the wife being primarily a housewife and mother.

Sociological surveys provide insight into the nature of Catholic religious beliefs. In 1959 a national survey of 3,000 youths found that 78 percent of all people between the ages of 16 and 24 regarded themselves as Catholics. Of those who did so, however, 16 percent did not believe that God created the world, 14 percent had not decided whether they would marry in the Church, and fully 69 percent were unwilling to support the Church's hard line against abortion (*Radio Free Europe*, 1963:161). Another study of Warsaw University students in 1961 found that only 19 percent both believed and regularly practiced their faith, while 34 percent did not believe in religion. An additional 47 percent believed, but did not regularly practice. Five percent of respondents in this survey stated they practiced their religion even though they did not believe in it, and only 3 percent declared themselves decisively opposed to religion (*Radio Free Europe*, 1963:201). Whether or not one believes in religion makes little or no difference in one's attitude toward socialist institutions, although it does in one's attitude toward "atheistic" Marxism or the Party. In 1958, 76 percent of nonbelievers, compared with 66 percent of believers, declared themselves to be supporters of socialism; 13 percent and 21 percent, respectively, were "undecided" (*Radio Free Europe*, 1963:203).

There have been a number of progressive Catholic intellectuals, as well as religious workers and peasants, who have been most receptive (in spite of the hierarchy's coldness) to ideas very much like liberation theology—that is, a Marxist-Catholic dialogue and synthesis. There are three major progressive Catholic associations, all of which have been granted seats in the Sejm: Pax, the Christian Social Association, and Znak. The first two advocate general support of Marxist social and economic policies while rejecting atheism. Pax, the oldest of the three groups, has repeatedly been condemned by the Church hierarchy. Its publications, however, have some influence among

rank-and-file Catholics. In 1957 a group split off from Pax to form the Christian Social Association, which attempted to maintain a less antagonistic relationship with the Church hierarchy; it has not, however, been able to win its support for its activities. Znak, named after its influential publication, is generally more critical of Communist Party social and economic policies (it is explicitly non-Marxist) but seeks areas of practical cooperation between the Church and the Party. Znak is probably the most influential of the progressive Catholic organizations, providing a public alternative perspective to both the Church hierarchy and the Party leadership (see U.S. Army, 1973:161-63).

During the 1970s the Church gained in political influence. Gierek's pragmatic policy was to make concessions to the hierarchy in hope of gaining its implicit support for the Party's role in the state and the economy. However, the hierarchy took the Party's concessions and appeals as a sign of weakness, escalating its demands on the state. It demanded the right to broadcast the mass on state radio and television and the reinstitution of religious instruction in the schools (Ascherson, 1981:120).

After the 1976 events the hierarchy began criticizing the government for food shortages and its handling of strikers, and increased its attacks on the "godless media." Cardinal Wyszynski encouraged Catholics to contribute money to those arrested for participating in the riots. He also responded favorably to the initiatives of the KOR intellectuals to begin cooperation (Ascherson, 1981:120).

In 1977 the hierarchy added to its demands the reestablishment of an independent mass Catholic press and the abolition of political censorship. It also began to support the "flying university," which taught courses from traditional nationalist and anti-Communist viewpoints (Ascherson, 1981:121). In 1976-81 the hierarchy continuously raised its price for counseling popular restraint.

In October 1978 the Church's political clout in Poland was considerably enhanced by the elevation of Cardinal Karol Wojtyla of Krakow to the papacy, the first non-Italian to become pope in hundreds of years. Both religious and nationalist sentiments were enhanced as Polish Catholics, as well as nonpracticing nationalists, were most pleased. The Polish opposition was greatly heartened. Church attendance rose. Closer to his flock and with more popular charisma than Wyszynski, Wojtyla was also less willing to compromise with the Party (see MacDonald, 1983:10; Ascherson, 1981:



122-23). His triumphant trip to Poland in 1979 sent shock waves through the country. At no time since the 1930s had the Church hierarchy been as powerful or represented a greater challenge to Polish Marxism.

### The Soviet Factor

Much has been made of the role of the Soviet Union in Poland, both by anti-Communists in the West and by intellectuals around Solidarity in Poland. Both tend to portray the Polish situation as essentially one of the people versus Soviet domination. Such a characterization has little real basis. The role of the Soviet Union in Polish developments has been grossly exaggerated as well as fundamentally distorted. On the one hand, the Polish revolution of 1944-48 was an indigenous struggle of the Polish working class and peasantry, not an import from the Soviet Union; and on the other, at least since 1956, the Soviet Union has been both a major subsidizer of the Polish economy and extremely tolerant of the organic political developments and changes within Polish society.

As the Nazi armies retreated, there was a spontaneous workers' revolution throughout occupied Europe, with workers, swept up in a wave of revolutionary enthusiasm about an egalitarian future, taking control of their factories. This phenomenon, as has been seen, occurred no less in Poland (with its strong Marxist working-class traditions) than in France, Italy, Greece, and Yugoslavia. The major difference between Eastern and Western Europe in this regard was that in the West, the U.S. and British armies immediately took power away from the workers and intimidated the largely Communist-led resistance preventing it from seizing state power, while in the East, the Red Army tolerated the workers' seizure of industries and the peasants' seizure of the land. The Soviets, for the most part, prevented the return of the old ruling classes, instead allowing the popular resistance movements to form broad-based coalition governments. Throughout most of Eastern Europe this was all that was necessary for the course of domestic class struggle and the logic of events to result in the thorough socialist transformation of society, as in Bulgaria, Romania, and Czechoslovakia. In Poland, however, the popular workers' movement was faced with a fairly significant middle-class-based military organization that had been formed during

the Nazi occupation and would not peacefully accept the rule of the progressive alliance with its solid working-class base. After two years of guerrilla warfare and sabotage, the armed resistance of antirevolutionary forces was totally suppressed.

The Soviet Army played an active role in assisting the Polish Army and police in suppressing the rightists. Given the solid support that the Communist-Socialist alliance had in 1945-47, as well as its superior arms, it appears that the progressive government would have easily won the civil war that might have broken out had the Soviet Army not been in Poland during this time. Thus, it seems that the primary Soviet help to the Polish revolution in 1944-48 was the prestige that accrued to the Polish Party by the Soviet liberation of the Polish nation and its protection of the indigenous revolutionary process, which was thus allowed to take its course without interference from the Western powers or the old ruling classes.

From 1948 to 1956 Poland adopted the Soviet model of socialist transition, pretty much copying in detail the institutional structure of Soviet society (except for agriculture). Given both the extremely tense international situation in this period (see Fleming, 1961) and the enthusiastic loyalty of the majority of Communist leaders to the Soviet Union, there was no need for the Soviets to use force or otherwise impose their model; it was sufficient for them to advise. Nevertheless, it was in this eight-year period that the Soviet Union had the greatest influence in Poland. And it was only in this period that it could truly be said that developments in Poland were essentially a product of developments in the Soviet Union—that is, that the characterization of Poland as a “satellite” of the USSR could be considered reasonably accurate.

In the upheaval following the Poznan riots in 1956, which culminated in Gomulka's assumption of power and Poland's essentially adopting the Yugoslav model of socialism, the Soviets expressed considerable displeasure at the course of events. While mobilizing troops around Poland's borders, they did not intervene in favor of the faction of the Party that wanted to persist in applying the Soviet model to Poland. In contrast with Hungary, where the Party lost control of the country, the Soviets allowed developments in Poland to take their natural course. After 1956 Poland followed a much more independent and nationalistic course—with the Soviets' blessing (see Dzienkowski, 1976:ch. 15).



It was not until 1981 that the Soviets once again intervened in Polish affairs, faced by massive upheaval and the threat of both the displacement of the Communist Party from power and Poland's dropping out of the system of defensive alliances that the Soviets had put together in response to the creation of NATO and the rearmament of Germany in 1955. During 1981 the Soviets sent increasingly stern warnings to the Polish leadership, and periodically engaged in military maneuvers around the Polish borders, raising the threat of a Soviet intervention if matters got out of control.

The Soviet Party sent an exceptionally strong letter to the Polish leaders on June 5, 1981. The letter attacked the growing wave of anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism that had been building in Poland—for instance, the desecration of Soviet war memorials was becoming a common occurrence. The Soviets claimed that enemies of socialism were in control of the mass media and that “counterrevolutionaries” and “revisionists” were dominating the process of selection of delegates to the upcoming Party congress. It called on all “healthy forces” in the Party and society to rally to defend Polish socialism. Stanislaw Kania and Wojciech Jaruzelski were accused of being incapable of leading Poland out of the growing crisis. While the Central Committee plenum called to respond to the letter upheld Kania's leadership and decided to go ahead with the Congress as planned, in spite of Soviet objections, the Soviet statement undoubtedly had a sobering effect on many Party members (Woodall, 1982:49; Ascher-son, 1981:270).

The Soviets felt especially provoked by the declaration of Solidarity's Gdansk congress, which called for the creation of Solidarity-type organizations in the other socialist countries. Referring to this call as “a revolting provocation,” the Soviets demanded that the Polish government “take determined and radical steps in order to stop malicious anti-Soviet propaganda and actions hostile to the Soviet Union” (*Wall Street Journal*, September 21, 1981). While the Soviets were certainly most reluctant to use their own troops, knowing the tremendous negative reaction this would have in both the West and Poland, they seemed to be willing to do whatever else was necessary to halt the post-Solidarity convention process of confrontation that could well have led to the overthrow of socialist institutions and Poland's dropping out of the Warsaw Pact. Their pressure on the Polish Party and military to intervene was certainly a major factor in the

December 13 declaration of martial law. However, given the emerging split in Solidarity between the hard-liners based in the anti-Communist intelligentsia and the working-class base that was becoming increasingly weary of confrontation with the government, it is a virtual certainty that the military would have executed its carefully organized martial law decree in any case and with the same results.

The principle essentially adopted by the Soviet Union in 1956—established by its intervention in Hungary and nonintervention in Poland in that year, and confirmed by its intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and its nonintervention in Romania and Hungary during the 1960s and 1970s, and in Poland in 1980 (sometimes known in the West as the “Brezhnev Doctrine”)—is that so long as the countries of Eastern Europe maintain some type of socialist economy under the leadership of some form of a Communist Party, and further maintain at least token membership in the Warsaw Pact, the Soviets will not interfere.

Within these broad parameters just about everything has been tried. Romania has largely followed the classical pre-1956 Soviet model while maintaining great distance from the international positions of the USSR, including membership in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and friendly relations with the United States, China, and Israel. Hungary has developed a rather decentralized form of economic organization that relies much more on markets than does the USSR and also has joined the IMF. Poland experimented with the Yugoslav model from 1956 to 1959, never collectivized agriculture, and recognized “independent” unions in 1980. The operational limits of the Soviets’ tolerance of diversity on both domestic policies and international issues has grown over time. The 1956 Polish reforms pushed the Soviets to their limits. Similar reforms 20 years later would hardly raise an eyebrow. Further, Romania’s independent foreign policy and passive participation in the Warsaw Pact would probably not have been tolerated in the early 1950s.

The “Brezhnev Doctrine” can be understood only in terms of the historical development of relations between Germany (and to a lesser extent Poland) and the USSR, and in terms of the logic of international imperialism and its attempt to contain, if not roll back, the rising tide of socialist revolutions in the world. The Soviet Union experienced three major invasions across the central European plain between 1915 and 1941. The German and Austrian armies con-



quered much of European Russia, penetrating as far as Georgia in 1915–19. Pilsudski intervened in the Russian Civil War in 1920, in an attempt to restore the pre-1773 Polish boundaries (which included most of the Ukraine and all of Belorussia). The Nazis almost overran the entire European part of the Soviet Union, reaching as far as the Volga River in 1941–42, killing approximately 20 million Soviets. In 1949 a unified West Germany was reconstituted by the Western powers, and in 1955 it was rearmed and brought into NATO, an alliance formed in 1949 to prevent any further working-class revolutions in Europe and, given the U.S. nuclear monopoly at the time, apparently to roll back Communism from Eastern Europe. Given the superior Western military establishment—especially in high-technology warfare, including nuclear missiles and delivery technology—Soviet concern about a possible repeat of the 1915, 1920, and 1941 events cannot be dismissed as a mere rationalization for “imperialism” in Eastern Europe; neither can it be dismissed as paranoia (see Fleming, 1961).

The legitimate interests of the Soviet Union in protecting itself from further invasions was recognized by the major Western powers in a series of summit meetings in 1945 highlighted by the Yalta agreements signed by the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union, in which the Soviets were allowed a free hand to eliminate fascist influences in Eastern Europe and were guaranteed that no regimes hostile to the Soviet Union would be installed in this region, thereby preventing a restoration of the prewar situation of a *cordon sanitaire* (see Kolko, 1968:chs. 13, 14).

That the Soviets did not insist on installing or maintaining either socialist or Soviet-model regimes in this region was demonstrated in their behavior in Finland and Austria. In spite of a strong Communist Party, the logic of domestic events in Finland did not lead to a socialist revolution in that country, and although the Soviets were in a position to intervene—having defeated the Finnish dictatorship’s invasion of the Soviet Union in coordination with the Germans in 1941—they did not do so. Instead, the Soviets were content with the international guarantee that Finland would remain neutral and that parliamentary forms would be guaranteed—that is, that the fascistic dictatorship would not be restored. Likewise in Austria. In 1955 the Soviets signed an agreement with the United States and Great Britain for their joint evacuation of the country and its permanent neutralization. Again the Soviets were happy to receive a guarantee that

the Austrians would not again, as they had in 1915 and 1941, invade their country.

In May 1945 the Soviets proposed that Germany be jointly administered by all four major allied powers, and that it be permanently deindustrialized, disarmed, and neutralized, so that it could never again pose a threat to other countries. Although the Soviets had borne the overwhelming burden of defeating the Germans—for instance, Soviet war casualties were approximately 100 times those of the United States, while roughly 90 percent of German military casualties were caused by the Soviets—the Soviets were rebuffed. Instead, the Western allies insisted that each major ally administer its own zone. In 1947 the Western allies' zones were merged into a single currency zone. German industry was heavily aided in reconstruction through the Marshall Plan. In 1955 a rearmed Germany was admitted into NATO. The "Berlin blockade" of 1948–49 was the Soviet protest against the first stages of the reconstruction of an anti-Soviet Germany and a demand for the return of all of the city of Berlin, which the Soviets had single-handedly conquered in 1945, at the cost of over 100,000 dead, to the Soviet zone.

In response to the hostility of the Western powers, the Soviets encouraged the establishment of the German Democratic Republic in its zone, as well as its eventual rearming and admission to the Warsaw Pact, the alliance of the Eastern European socialist countries established in 1955 in response to the threat of the NATO alliance. In 1955, at the time of the signing of the accords that permanently neutralized Austria, the Soviets suggested the same solution for Germany. They announced that they were willing to withdraw their army from eastern Germany and facilitate formally free elections for the whole country—elections, it was obvious to all, that the Communist Party would not win—providing the allies would withdraw their armies and sign an Austria-type agreement ensuring the permanent neutrality of the country. The Western powers refused, on the ground that they would be giving up more than the Soviets.

In response to the West's negative reactions to the Soviets' proposals, Poland, with enthusiastic Soviet endorsement, suggested the establishment of a "nuclear-free" zone in Central Europe, which would have meant that there could be no nuclear weapons placed in either Germany or Poland. The "Rapacki Plan" suggested the Soviets' willingness to renew their 1955 proposal of permanently neutralizing Germany, but now with Poland thrown in. But once again,



realizing that a pro-Western, anti-Soviet rearmed Germany was the keystone of the NATO alliance, the Western powers declined.

In the face of the refusal of the United States and its Western European allies to seriously accept the Soviet-backed proposals for the neutralization of Central Europe, the Soviets could hardly be blamed for fearing another invasion from the west. Nor could they be blamed for insisting that the West would not get for nothing in 1968 or 1981 what it refused to compromise for earlier—that is, the neutralization of East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland would not occur without the neutralization of West Germany at the same time. The premise of the “Brezhnev Doctrine” has always been, and remains, the existence of a militarily strong, anti-Communist West Germany in which the massive nuclear firepower of the European divisions of the U.S. military are based.

The parallel myth to that of the Soviet imposition of socialism in Poland has been the accusation that the Soviets have systematically exploited “their Polish colony.” These two together are the case for “Soviet (social) imperialism”—the argument that Eastern Europe, including Poland, is in essentially the same relation to the USSR as the dependencies of the United States, such as Central America and the Philippines, are to the United States.

In fact, a good case can be made that before 1956 Poland *was* in such a relationship with the USSR. On the premise perhaps that the labor theory of value ought to apply to trade between socialist countries—that the price of trade goods ought to be proportional to the labor time incorporated in them—Polish coal was sold to the USSR from 1946 to 1953 at approximately 10 percent of its world price. Further, in this period the terms of trade of the Eastern countries with the USSR, as well as their common participation in joint economic enterprises, were designed to facilitate, or at least had that effect, the reconstruction of the devastated Soviet economy (see Goldman, 1967:7).

All this changed, however, in 1956. In November, Gomulka renegotiated Polish-Soviet trade and debt agreements on terms highly favorable to Poland. Polish coal was now to be sold to the Soviets at approximately the world price, while the Soviets were to continue to supply petroleum and most other raw materials the Polish economy needed at substantially below the world price. At the same time, in compensation for the coal subsidy that the Poles had provided the USSR in 1946–53, the Soviets canceled the outstanding Polish debt of

approximately \$500 million (Goldman, 1967:7; Dziewanowski, 1976:283).

Since 1956 the terms of trade between the Soviets and the Poles have been extremely favorable to Poland and, in fact, have amounted to a considerable subsidy to the Polish economy. A study of the Polish-Soviet terms of trade in 1959 found that the prices the Soviets paid for Polish exports were higher in 20 out of 28 categories, and lower in 7, than the prices offered by the West; in the case of Soviet exports to Poland, the price the Poles paid was significantly lower than the world market price for 11 out of 17 basic categories and significantly higher for 6. This study found that, on average, Polish exports to the Soviet Union were purchased by the Soviets at a price 1.45 times higher than that obtainable in the West. At the same time the Soviets were supplying the Polish economy with goods at an average of 81 percent of their world market price. In other words, the terms of trade of Poland with the Soviet Union were 1.8 times better for Poland than they were in the world capitalist market (Holzman, 1974:300). The Soviets have consistently provided almost all of Polish petroleum needs for about 85 percent of the world market price.

In good part because the trade of Socialist countries with each other is conducted through bilateral agreements that balance the value of goods each country sends to the other, rather than cleared through transfers of hard currency, the value of Polish exports to the Soviet Union (at least until 1979) almost exactly equaled the value of Polish imports. However, in any given year there may be a positive or negative balance. For example, in 1970-71 Poland imported about 6 percent more from the Soviet Union than it exported to it. In 1972-75 the Poles exported about 5 percent more to the Soviets than they got in return. In 1977-78 the Poles received about 5 percent more than they imported (see Table 4.1). However, in 1981-82 the Soviets heavily subsidized the Polish economy through trade. In 1981 they provided Poland with about \$1.3 billion more in goods than Poland exported to the USSR (Nutti, 1981:34). According to the *Wall Street Journal*, "They also have increased deliveries of consumer goods and supply almost all of Poland's oil at prices far below world levels" (September 21, 1981).

In addition to their heavy trade subsidy, since 1956 the Soviets have provided Poland, as well as the other countries of Eastern Europe, with considerable economic assistance. For example, the So-

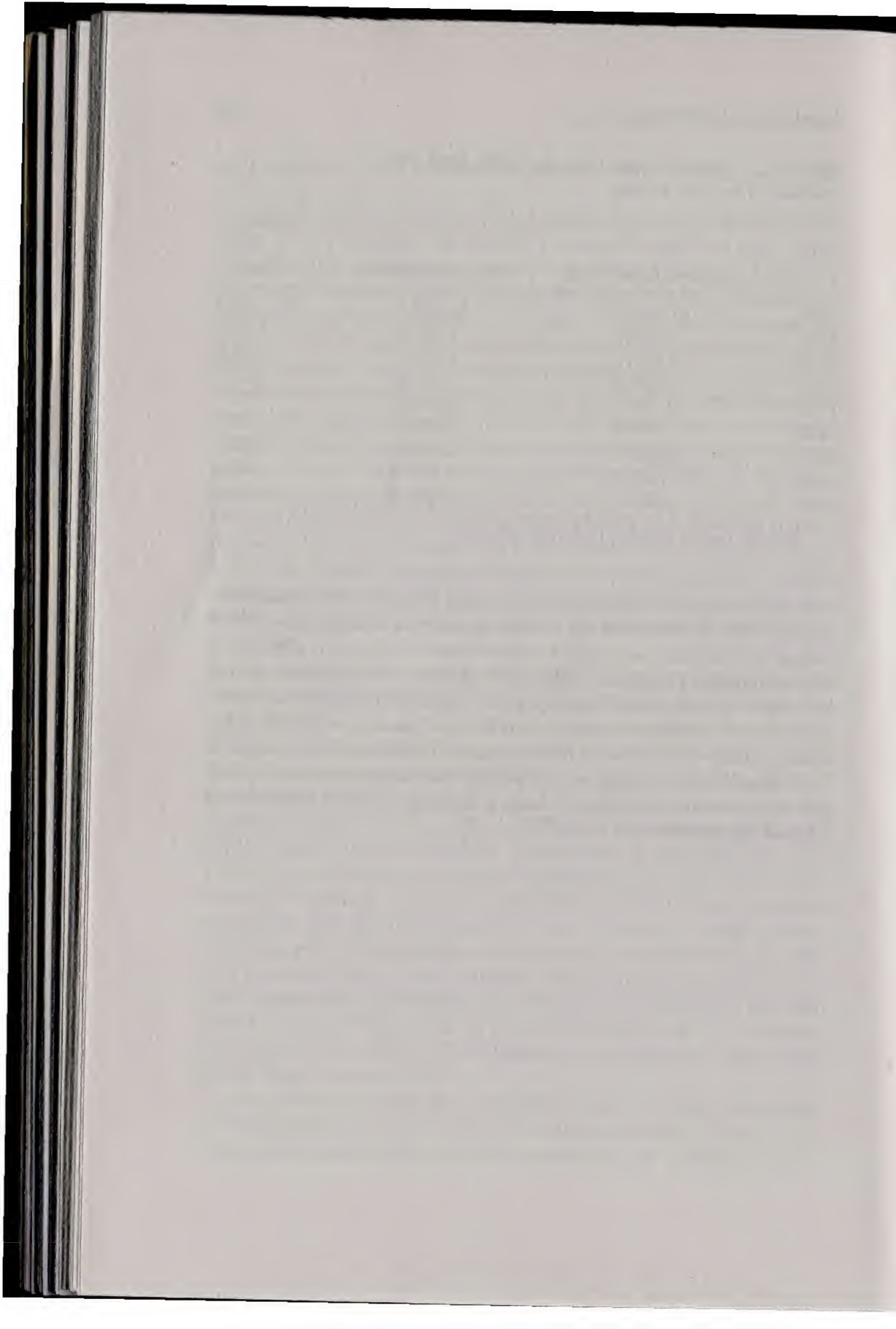


**Table 4.1.** Poland's Trade with the USSR, 1970-78  
(millions of current dollars)

	<i>Imports from USSR</i>	<i>Exports to USSR</i>	<i>Balance of Trade</i>
1970	\$1,361.3	\$1,250.8	\$ - 110.5
1971	1,425.2	1,387.2	- 38.0
1972	1,591.2	1,816.1	+ 224.9
1973	1,880.2	2,081.2	+ 201.0
1974	2,354.3	2,372.0	+ 17.7
1975	3,177.6	3,240.7	+ 63.1
1976	3,535.1	3,335.2	- 199.9
1977	4,246.3	3,882.9	- 363.0
1978	4,809.5	4,781.6	- 27.9

*Source:* United Nations, 1975:783; 1979, 777.

viets provided the Poles with a \$450 million loan to aid reconstruction in 1947. In 1956-58 the Soviets extended a total of about \$3.6 billion in economic assistance to their Eastern European allies: \$1.5 billion in loans, \$1 billion in debt cancellations, and \$1 billion in free transfers of jointly owned enterprises to the Eastern European countries. Soviet economic assistance to Poland became especially generous in 1981-82. Between the summer of 1980 and the summer of 1981, the Soviet Union provided Poland with approximately \$5 billion in economic assistance to help it through its crisis (*Wall Street Journal*, September 21, 1981).





# The Dynamics of the Crisis

## —II—

The events of 1980–81 can be understood only as, at root, the manifestation of the struggle among the Polish working class, peasantry, and intelligentsia. This struggle was, however, most complex. The institutional manifestation of the events of 1980–81 occurred through the struggle of Poland's four major institutions: the Party, the Church, Solidarity, and the army. Within each of them there was an internal tension, itself a manifestation of the underlying class base of the events of 1980–81. In both Solidarity and the Party, especially, there was a sharp struggle that can be grasped only in terms of the tension between the interests of the industrial working class and the intelligentsia that were central to both. And even here the manifestation of class interests in political positions was far from direct and obvious.

This section first outlines the events of 1980–81 that saw the birth and development of Solidarity. It then examines in detail three of the major actors in the Polish crisis: the anti-Communist intellectuals, largely grouped, at the beginning of the 1980 events, around KOR; the Catholic Church; and the Party. In each case emphasis is given to the class bases of these social forces. Although the crisis of 1980 originated in spontaneous working-class protest against the price increases mandated by the Western banks, it was soon turned to the advantage of both the anti-Communist intelligentsia and the Catholic Church, each of which sought to turn the movement to its own ends. The tremendous influence that both acquired over the rather amorphous Solidarity movement spoke to the crisis of legiti-

macy of Marxism-Leninism and the authority of the Communist Party. Although both the anti-Communist intellectuals and the Church attempted to direct the movement to the overturning of the Party's leading role and the radical restructuring of Polish institutions, they were frustrated in their aims by the failure of Solidarity's working-class base to follow them. The intervention of the Polish Army in mid-December was able to bring the immediate crisis to a halt rather easily. Solidarity could be suppressed because its leadership's attempt to radically restructure the dominant institutions of Polish socialism did not have the support of most Polish workers. Nevertheless, what has become the virtually permanent crisis of Polish society continues eating away beneath the surface, waiting to explode again.



## Poland: July 1980–December 1981

### —5—

#### The Formation and Development of Solidarity

In July 1980 matters again came to a head, as they had in 1956 and 1970, when, under pressure from the Western banks to implement an austerity program in order to pay back its debt, the Polish government increased the prices of a number of highly subsidized basic foodstuffs. Workers in a number of major plants spontaneously went out on strike in protest, demanding a compensatory wage increase. The government policy was to grant the workers' demands, so as to get them back to work. At first settlements tended to be for 5 percent pay increases, but by the beginning of August workers were getting raises of 15 or even 20 percent. Although there was no general strike, strikes for compensatory wage increases had affected virtually all parts of Poland (see Ascherson, 1981:130). The principle of granting workers 100 percent pay for days during which they were on strike was also established.

In early August both KOR, with which Lech Walesa was associated, and Young Poland (a small, explicitly anti-Communist, nationalist grouping of right-wing intellectuals) began agitating among the Gdansk workers for a strike that would go beyond merely asking for a compensatory pay increase, one that would begin to challenge the authority of the Party. Both began to focus their efforts on the firing of Anna Walentynowicz for attempting to organize strikes. Working together, the activists of Young Poland and Walesa's Free Trade Union (sponsored by KOR) on August 15 distributed 6,000 leaflets and put up posters around the Gdansk shipyard. They raised a ban-

ner stating "We Demand the Reinstatement of Anna Walentynowicz and a Cost of Living Rise of 1,000 Zlotys." These actions precipitated discussions with groups of workers and eventually a mass meeting of about 2,000 of the yard's 16,000 workers who had stopped work (Ascherson, 1981:145-46).

As the shipyard manager had just about convinced the workers to return to work with promises of a pay increase, Lech Walesa, who had been dismissed some years before as a shipyard electrician, was helped over the 12-foot walls of the shipyard and began to address the protesting workers. At the end of his impassioned speech he turned to the shipyard manager and, in relation to the manager's promises to investigate the workers' grievances, yelled, "We don't believe in your lies. We're not going to allow ourselves to be cheated again. Until you give us firm guarantees, we'll stage an occupation strike." Once he gained leadership of the demonstration, he expanded its original demands to include the demand for an "independent" union (Dobbs et al., 1981:89).

The Gdansk shipyard strike quickly spread to other factories in the Baltic seaport cities. The unified strike committee that emerged out of the various separate enterprise strike committees advocated occupying their factories instead of engaging in mass demonstrations, which might easily have turned into riots and battles with the police, such as had resulted in the deaths of a number of workers in 1970 (Dobbs et al., 1981:99). This coordinating committee soon spread throughout the country, naming itself Solidarity.

The list of demands of the striking Gdansk shipyard workers, largely due to the intervention of anti-Party intellectuals, and largely through the mediation of Walesa and KOR, soon expanded to a number of other political and economic issues: the guarantee of the right to strike; the abolition of all censorship in the media; the release of all political prisoners; access by religious groups to the media, including the broadcasting of the mass on television; the abolition of privileges for security services and Party officials, such as access to less expensive or better goods in their union shops;\* the limitation of food ex-

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\*It is standard practice in the Socialist countries for each union to maintain its own shops or commissaries for the exclusive use of its members. In such shops one can obtain rationed or hard-to-get goods as well as limited amounts of otherwise available goods at special low prices. In the West, families of military personnel usually have access to similar shops.



ports to surplus commodities; the introduction of meat rationing to guarantee an equitable distribution; full pay for the time spent on strike; the guarantee of automatic salary increases following increases in prices or devaluation of the currency; publication of information in the media about the strikes and strike committees; the restoration to their previous position of all employees dismissed after the 1970 and 1976 strikes; the appointment to managerial posts purely on the basis of technical qualifications, not on Party membership; the reduction of the pension age to 50 for women and 55 for men, as well as an increase in pensions; the extension of paid maternity leave to three full years and assurance of an adequate number of places in nurseries and kindergartens for the children of working mothers; the reduction of the waiting time for new flats; the reduction of the workweek from six days to five (see Stankiszkis, 1981:222–23; *The Militant*, August 29, 1980:3).

It should be emphasized that the demands of these strikers did not explicitly challenge either Polish socialism or the leadership of the Polish United Workers' Party. Although the anti-Party intellectuals and the Church were able to insert various political demands, the thrust of the strikers was clearly to improve their standard of living and to increase workers' say at the point of production (the content of the demand for "free trade unions").

Once again, as in October 1956 and December 1970, the Party and Polish society were thrown into crisis. On August 31, the government agreed to most of the Gdansk workers' demands, including the rights to form independent unions and to strike (on condition that the Baltic strike committee recognize the "leading role of the Party") (Stankiszkis, 1981:205). The Baltic strike committee inspired a wave of strikes, winning concession after concession, mostly through merely threatening strikes. Virtually all sectors of the economy participated in an orgy of demanding and receiving wage increases while cutting back production, and in protests against various Party or government policies.

The strike movement and the formation of Solidarity were very popular in Poland, although for most Poles they did not represent a fundamental challenge to the Polish system but, rather, a chance to increase their living standards and gain increased control over their lives. The Polish Public Opinion and Program Research Center (attached to Polish Radio and TV), which conducts regular surveys of random samples of from 1,000 to 2,000 Poles on issues of the day,

found that at the beginning of September 1981, immediately after the Gdansk accords, 89 percent of Poles supported strikes in principle, as a justified method of backing up workers' demands. About 60 percent of the population was strongly in favor of the Gdansk agreements that recognized the rights of independent trade unions, with another 31 percent "rather for it." Sixty-seven percent of Poles supported Solidarity's one-hour "warning strike" on October 3, 1980, and only 17 percent clearly opposed it. This strike found its greatest support among workers (72 percent) and least among farmers (56 percent). In mid-September 1980, 63 percent of all those employed stated that they intended to join the new independent unions, and only 19 percent said they intended to remain in the old official unions.

After the Gdansk agreements were signed by the government and the workers on August 31, 1980, Polish sociologists surveyed the nation and found that 28 percent believed the government would keep all of its promises, 9 percent believed the government would keep none of its promises, and 52 percent expected only part of the accords to be fulfilled (Kurczewski, 1981:21). In mid-September 1980 sample surveys found that 65 percent of the Polish public believed that the government was keeping its side of the accords. After the registration of the union and the first meetings between the prime minister and the union, 41 percent of the public believed that goodwill was displayed by both parties, and another 6 percent by the government but not Solidarity, while 30 percent felt that goodwill was being expressed by Solidarity but not the government, and 6 percent felt that it was being expressed by neither (see Kurczewski, 1981:23).

A national poll taken in May 1981 found that while 90 percent of Poles declared "confidence" in Solidarity, 32 percent declared "confidence" in the Party—still a rather respectable figure, similar to the confidence level in Italy for the Italian Communist Party (Paul and Simon, 1981:37).

On November 25, 1980, 28 percent of all Poles over the age of 15 belonged to Solidarity, which, assuming that all of these were state employees, amounted to 54 percent of all those employed in state-owned enterprises. By mid-January 1981, Solidarity had 8.5 million members, about 60 percent of all employed persons. It should be noted that one in six of all Solidarity members were also members of the Communist Party—that is, about 40 percent of all Party mem-



bers—indicating that there was no dichotomy between the two organizations, and that rank-and-file Communists, as they had in 1956 and 1970, took an active part in the workers' movement for raising their consumption levels and increasing direct control over the conditions of production. In fact, in July 1981 the PUWP officially endorsed the recruitment of Solidarity members into the Party (see Kurczewski, 1981:21–23; Adamski, 1981).

There was a strong component of egalitarianism in Solidarity, similar to that manifested in the workers' councils in 1956–59. Solidarity demanded a more equal distribution of Poland's resources, its early demands emphasizing that workers at the lowest pay levels should get the largest raises. One of Lech Walesa's most popular rallying cries was "We can all live on one crust of bread as long as we get the same amount" (*New York Times*, February 4, 1981). Most Poles approved both the egalitarian and reduced work provisions of the reforms instituted in August and September 1980. Eighty-six percent were in favor of the increase in pensions for the lowest categories, and 76 percent were in favor of the increase in the minimum wage. Eighty-two percent approved of the introduction of the five-day workweek. Among the Polish public the two most popular portions of the Gdansk accords were the decision to introduce a national wage increase and the agreement to allow independent unions. The demands that had the least popular support were those on the elimination of censorship, suggesting that while the former issues were authentic working-class concerns, the latter were issues of the intelligentsia and the Church. Working-class concern was focused on the economic, rather than the political, aspects of the reforms (see Kurczewski, 1981:22–24).

The results of the Public Opinion and Program Research Center's sampling of public opinion during 1980 clearly "demonstrated a widespread view that unions should primarily concern themselves with labour and socioeconomic questions" (Kurczewski, 1981:23).

Solidarity came increasingly to emphasize workers' self-management of enterprises and the election of enterprise directors (on more or less the Yugoslav model), with the enterprises given significantly more autonomy. Solidarity economists argued that only workers' self-management would be able to restore the economy to health and resume the process of increasing living standards. In the summer of 1981 the government concurred that economic decision making should be decentralized to the enterprises (more or less on the

Hungarian model), with the workers given a considerably greater say in decision making. But it strongly resisted the demand that enterprise managers be elected (see *New York Times*, August 23, 1981:sec. 4; September 4, 1981; October 7, 1981).

At its September 1981 First National Congress, Solidarity emphasized its insistence on the decentralization of economic decision making, the granting of fundamental power over the enterprises to elected workers' councils, the right to elect and replace the enterprise directors at any time, and (given the government's resistance to the demand for elected enterprise directors) a national referendum on the question. (In the event the government refused to conduct such a referendum, Solidarity pledged to organize one itself.) The proposed Solidarity draft plan for economic reorganization stated: "The enterprise workers, through their self-management organs, have the exclusive disposition of enterprise assets" (Art. 6.2). "The director is appointed by the Workers' Council by means of public competition" (Art. 42.1). "The enterprise director is the executor of the decisions of organs of workers' self-management" (Art. 36).

Article 19 stipulated that just about all basic decisions were to be made on the enterprise level by the workers' councils, thus essentially doing away with economic planning and replacing it by free market competition among enterprises. According to Article 19, "The competence of the workers' councils should include: decisions on the fundamental directions of economic activity and development of the enterprise; decisions on income distribution; decisions on economic agreements and cooperation contracts with other enterprises; the conclusion of agreements with state organs on mutual cooperation; the determination of principles of employment policy; the control of the totality of enterprise activity; decisions on acquisition and disposal of fixed assets; decisions on import-export contracts; and the approval of motions on government directives."

Solidarity's proposed economic program argued as follows:

It is necessary to sweep away the bureaucratic barriers which make it impossible for the market to operate. The central organs of economic administration should not limit enterprise activity or prescribe supplies and buyers for its output. Enterprises shall be able to operate freely on the internal market, except in fields where a license is compulsory. International trade must be accessible to all enterprises. The union appreciates the importance of



exports, which are of value to the country and the workers. Consumers' associations and anti-monopoly legislation should ensure that enterprises do not carve out a privileged place in the market. A special law must be introduced to protect consumers' rights. The relationship between supply and demand must determine price levels. (cited in Persky and Flam, 1982:209)

Solidarity also demanded the legalization of small capitalist businesses (up to 50 workers) and the handing over of the retail trade to private business (see Nuti, 1981:31–32; *New York Times*, December 14, 1981).

Had such a model been implemented, it would have resulted in the restoration of the market forces operative in Western economies. Its results have been manifested in Yugoslavia, where a somewhat less extreme version of market socialism resulted in massive unemployment, high rates of inflation, competitive advertising, and all the other inefficiencies of unplanned market economies, as well as in greatly increased wage differentials, especially between unskilled workers and the technical and managerial staff (for whose services the workers' councils must compete; see Part III). The replacement of central planning of prices and state subsidization of the necessities of life by the forces of the market would have produced not only massive layoffs and great income differentiation, but also the massive bankruptcy of the inefficient peasants, most of whom would have been forced to migrate to the cities in search of unavailable work within a few years, and a radical increase in food prices and the middleman's profit margin (replacing the heavy state subsidy). While shortages in retail shops would have been ended by extreme price rises, this would hardly have been what most Solidarity supporters had in mind when they were complaining about standing in lines.

The movement spread to the peasants, who formed their own "rural Solidarity," which demanded higher prices for food. Rural Solidarity claimed the support of almost half of Poland's peasants (*New York Times*, October 19, 1981). Even a middlemen's Solidarity was created, which demanded a high profit margin between the wholesale prices paid to peasants and retail prices paid by workers. The Solidarity movement was thus faced with the mutually contradictory demands of peasants, workers, and middlemen, all for a bigger share of the shrinking national income. The sole unifying element of this contradictory movement was criticism of the Party's

alleged economic "mismanagement" and suggestions that somehow the Soviet Union was appropriating Polish resources. This contradiction thus joined the two other fundamental contradictions in Solidarity's demands: the opposing demands of increased consumption and reductions in productivity, and the faith in the power of free markets combined with strong egalitarianism and a commitment to full employment, the mutual coexistence of which both Yugoslavia and the capitalist economies have shown to be impossible.

The obviously contradictory nature of the Solidarity economic program suggests that the anti-Party Social Democratic, nationalist, and Church intellectuals who put it together, and encouraged workers, peasants, and middlemen alike to believe in its viability, were more interested in building a coalition that offered all things to all people and was designed to destroy the existing political and economic order in Poland, than they were in offering the constructive alternatives that the Polish working class was looking for.

### **The Role of Anti-Communist Intellectuals**

In 1964 two young professors at Warsaw University, Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski, both members of the Communist Party, issued a 90-page manifesto criticizing the PUWP for being dominated by a small elite of top officials, which they referred to as "the central political bureaucracy." They argued that the regime had become stale, bureaucratic, and ineffectual, and that as a result the standard of living of workers was stagnating at the subsistence level. They concluded their statement with a call for a "true socialist state" in Poland. Both were expelled from the Party for their attack.

A number of other young Party intellectuals became increasingly active in attacking the Party's policies and practices. Many of the leaders of the "antibureaucratic" and "liberal" tendency among young intellectuals—they were enthusiastic supporters of the intellectual-led "liberalization movement" in Czechoslovakia in 1965–68—were university professors, and as a result were in a position to generate considerable support among students. They played a decisive role in catalyzing student discontent in the spring of 1968, which was manifested in a wave of demonstrations (Dziewanowski, 1976:294–95; Dobbs et al., 1981:42). As a result of the progressive alienation during 1964–68 of a considerable number of idealistic



young Communists of a liberal bent—political pluralism and a relaxation of censorship were also a central part of their programs—the Party lost an important source of creative potential leaders. Further, the growing intellectual opposition picked up a section of intellectuals not identified with either the Catholic Church or the traditional nationalist and anti-Semitic right.

The young ex-Party intellectuals soon established working relations with a number of prominent prewar right-wing Social Democrats, such as Edward Lipinski and Antovi Pajdak, who came to have a considerable influence in shaping their developing ideology (*New York Times*, November 16, 1980:sec. 4). This convergence of older anti-Communist Social Democrats and young ex-Communists came to adopt, and to be adopted by, the anti-Communist international Social Democratic tradition—for instance, Sweden became their model, they became avid supporters of the U.S. position in Vietnam and, in general, rabidly anti-Soviet; and they developed relations with such Second International figures as Albert Shanker.\* These Social Democratic intellectuals became increasingly active during the 1970s in putting out “underground” periodicals and in organizing “flying universities,” both of which propagated their ideas among students (Paul and Simon, 1981:26).

All segments of the intelligentsia—Catholic, traditional rightist, and Social Democrats—however, remained isolated from the working class. They had no role in initiating or leading the events of 1956 and 1970, or the somewhat smaller wave of strikes and protests in 1976, although they certainly did endorse and attempt to interpret them. The participating workers, however, took little notice, largely limiting their demands to improvements in living standards and increasing control over conditions in the factories (Paul and Simon, 1981:26, 29, 32).

During the 1976 events the anti-Communist intellectuals, led by the most prominent of the younger ex-Communists, Kuron, and the most prominent of the pre-World War II anti-Communist Social Democrats, Lipinski, organized the Committee for the Defense of

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\*The Second International is the international association of the world's (mostly strongly anti-communist) social democratic parties (e.g., the German SPD, the British Labour Party, the French Socialist Party, the Israeli Labor Party, etc.). Anti-communism and support for mildly egalitarian and pro-union measures are characteristic of most of these parties.

Workers (KOR) in order to mobilize intellectual support for, and (it was hoped) gain leadership of, the spontaneous workers' protests.

KOR was formally limited to 34 prominent individuals divided among older and younger Social Democratic opponents of the regime. It had many more supporters, however, especially among young nationalist and anti-Communist students. Of the 34 formal members, 5 were veterans of the anti-Bolshevik War of 1920–21; 13 were veterans of the World War II resistance (mostly members of the Polish Home Army); several were prominent older intellectuals (writer Jerzy Andrzejewski, actress Halina Mikołajska, economist Edward Lipiński), and many were veteran leaders of the 1968 student movement (Jacek Kuron, Adam Michnik, and Jan Lityński)\* (Ascherson, 1981:138).

KOR, having learned the lesson that previous challenges to the regime had failed because of the lack of unity between the Church and secular opponents of the regime, sought and achieved a working agreement with the Church hierarchy. In Kuron's words, the Church "had to oppose the system that placed restrictions on the liberty of the individual, which is a fundamental Christian value and a value of our entire culture (cited in Ascherson, 1981:141). In 1977 Michnik published an influential essay in which he reviewed the history of the anti-Communist opposition in Poland, arguing that its weakness stemmed from the division between the Church and anticlerical intellectuals. Beginning in 1977, KOR and the Church engaged in a mutually advantageous cooperation, even while there were differences in their strategies (see Ascherson, 1981:141).

For the first time the intelligentsia began to play a significant role in the workers' periodic protests. After the 1976 protests broke out, the KOR intellectuals went to the factories to circulate their literature, raised funds for protesters arrested, and generally offered their support. Their willingness to risk arrest impressed numerous discontented workers, some of whom began to take the KOR Social Democratic intellectuals (and their liberal but left rhetoric) seriously (*New York Times*, November 16, 1980: sec. 4; Paul and Simon, 1981:32; Dobbs et al., 1981:65). After the 1976 events KOR continued its attempt to influence the working class by publishing an un-

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\*There is reason to believe that KOR was in part financed by a network of Eastern European émigrés set up in 1975 with the help of the CIA (which was, of course, interested in destabilizing the Polish regime) (see *New York Times*, December 26, 1981).



derground periodical, *Robotnik* (The Worker). In September 1979 *Robotnik* published a "charter of workers rights" signed by Lech Walesa and a number of others who were later to become leaders of the Solidarity movement. This "charter" argued that the aim of the Polish working class should be "the establishment of independent trade unions." The demands contained in this document included the guarantee of the right to strike, the indexing of wages to inflation, a 40-hour workweek, and the abolition of privileges for Party members—all demands that a year later were to become central in the Solidarity movement (see Dobbs et al., 1981:103).

The KOR intellectuals were thus in a good position to influence events once the spontaneous strikes broke out in the Baltic region in July and August 1980. Within a few days after the strikes began, KOR organized an information center to help spread and coordinate the spontaneous strikes. Its members actively intervened as influential advisers to those emerging as the workers' leaders, many of whom, such as Walesa himself, they had been carefully cultivating since 1976. While during the first few days of the strikes workers were singing the "Internationale" and limiting their demands to higher living standards and increased control over production, within a few days, through the impact of intellectual intervention, they were singing the Polish national anthem and adding to their demands not only the issues raised for years by the Social Democratic intellectuals but also demands for more rights for the Catholic Church.

Lech Walesa, the son of a village carpenter, had attended technical school to become an electrician. As an electrical technician at the Gdansk shipyard, he became an activist in the 1970 protests and was elected to the strike committee. After attempting to organize demonstrations in July 1976, he was fired from his position. Staying in touch with his former co-workers, Walesa remained a respected figure among much of the local technical intelligentsia.

Soon after his firing he linked up with KOR, and during 1976–80, working closely with this organization, became virtually a full-time dissident activist. In April 1978, with KOR backing, Walesa was involved in setting up the "Baltic Committee of the Free Independent Trade Union." In December 1978 and December 1979, again working with KOR, he was instrumental in organizing demonstrations at the gates of the Gdansk shipyard to commemorate the 1970 events (Dobbs et al., 1981:101–04). The close working relations he developed over this period with the KOR intellectuals put him in

an extremely good position to be promoted through their underground media, and to be celebrated through the Western radio broadcasts to Poland, for which KOR was serving as the principal conduit of information. Walesa's KOR-sponsored Free Independent Trade Union, however, was never more than a paper organization with little influence among workers.

During the decisive early weeks of the 1980 strike wave, the KOR information network, designed to destabilize the regime, operated principally by gathering news of workers' actions and communicating that news to Western news agencies in Warsaw, which transmitted the information to the anti-Communist radio stations in Western Europe (such as Radio Free Europe, BBC, Voice of America) for broadcast back into Poland. In an attempt to stop this practice, in mid-August the government interned Kuron and a number of other KOR leaders (Dobbs et al., 1981:69; Paul and Simon, 1981:32).

Kuron and other KOR intellectuals were central to events, being the closest advisers of Walesa. KOR leader Andrej Celinski became secretary to Solidarity's National Coordinating Commission (*Washington Post*, September 29, 1981). The demand for the release of all political prisoners became part of the strike demands and was, in fact, granted in the August 1980 settlement, Kuron and the other KOR leaders being released from detention as a result. Until martial law was declared in December 1981, the government ceased to detain KOR leaders, thus giving them a free hand to guide Solidarity, of which they took full advantage (*New York Times*, November 16, 1980:sec. 4; Dobbs et al., 1981:69-70). In September 1981 KOR was officially dissolved, declaring that its purpose had been fully realized.

Summarizing the dissolution of KOR at the First National Congress of Solidarity at Gdansk in September 1981, the *Wall Street Journal* reported:

Edward Lipinski, 93 years old, who helped found the dissident group five years ago, told the national congress of Solidarity, the independent union: "Our fight for making Poland a free and sovereign nation should now be passed on to Solidarity. We consider our activities finished. You have now taken our role."

Mr. Lipinski was interrupted often by applause during a passionate speech before the 896 congress delegates. When he finished, the delegates sang *Sto Lat*, meaning may he live another hundred years.



Thus ended the existence of KOR, a loosely tied group of Poland's most prominent political opposition voices, without which most analysts believe Solidarity could never have been born or have survived its first year.

KOR had prepared Polish society for Solidarity with its extensive information network. It also provided an organizational framework and a national structure for the union; it gave Solidarity its ideology, and it fought incessantly over the past year to hold together the often fractious movement of some 10 million workers. KOR's most prominent members have become key advisors to union leader Lech Walesa.

Jacek Kuron, the most influential KOR member and a right-hand man to Mr. Walesa, said, "KOR has fulfilled its function. Our program was realized 100%. With Solidarity's existence, KOR has become superfluous." (*Wall Street Journal*, September 29, 1981)

Walesa "paid tribute to KOR for laying the foundation stone to Solidarity," but added, "we have outgrown our teachers" (Dobbs et al., 1981:118). Summing up events, Kuron stated, "The essential thing is to understand that the regime has received a fatal blow, either it must die, or it must destroy Solidarity. There is no other solution" (cited in Dobbs et al., 1981:70).

The intellectuals interjected a strong component of Polish nationalism into the workers' movement. The celebration of General Joseph Pilsudski, Poland's chief of state (and dictator from 1926 to 1935) through most of the prewar period grew. To quote the *Wall Street Journal*:

The Pilsudski cult has burgeoned openly this year, along with the surge of nationalist fervor in general that has made the Polish national anthem the theme song of the independent union Solidarity.

In Gdansk, the birthplace of Solidarity, the shipyard was renamed in Mr. Pilsudski's honor at a gala ceremony, although the marshal's granddaughter, who last year returned from family exile in England to work for Solidarity, declined to attend for fear of a flood of similar invitations. (*Wall Street Journal*, November 12, 1981)

Among the 829 delegates, 70 percent of whom were from the intelligentsia, to the second session of the Solidarity convention in September 1981, about 100 were sympathizers of the KPN—the

Movement for an Independent Poland—an extremely nationalist, anti-Semitic, and anti-Communist conservative group. The KPN people in Solidarity, it should be noted, were strongly anti-KOR, on the grounds that it was too moderate in confrontations with the government and that it was Social Democratic (see *Wall Street Journal*, October 26, 1981).

Walesa, like most of the younger technicians who accounted for much of the leadership of the 1980 events, had amorphous socialist, but clearly anti-Communist, politics. He believed strongly in workers' self-management, the decentralization of the economy (with reliance on markets), and the keeping of all medium and large enterprises socialized while expanding the small business sector in both urban and rural areas. Walesa has been quoted as making a variety of statements about Communism, socialism, and democracy. On November 16, 1980, Walesa was quoted in the *Manchester Guardian* as saying, "I am not a socialist" and asserting that he agreed with "Solzhenitsyn's criticism of the West as well as Russia" (see *Workers World*, December 25, 1981). On December 9, 1980, Walesa, in an interview with columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, praised Ronald Reagan's election as "a good sign to the world and Poland," a sentiment that generally seems to reflect the attitude of most Solidarity and KOR leaders toward the role of the United States in the world. Referring to the alternatives to Poland's socialist system, Walesa stated:

Call it what you will, but it has to be efficient . . . if something gets jammed and breaks down, then either we throw it away or we do something else. Since I have had the experience of 1956, 1968, 1970, 1976, and now 1980, I know that these breakdowns are ever more frequent in Poland. There is little point in carrying out repairs. We might as well buy a new machine. (Dobbs et al., 1981:110)

Solidarity established very close relations with right-wing anti-Communist unions in the West. Albert Shanker provided free space in the New York headquarters of the American Federation of Teachers for the U.S. information office of Solidarity. Solidarity invited Lane Kirkland, head of the AFL-CIO, and Irving Brown, long-time AFL-CIO expert on undermining Communist influence in



European unions, to speak at its national convention in September 1981 (the Polish government refused entry visas to both).<sup>\*</sup> By the beginning of December 1980 the AFL-CIO had raised \$140,000 to support Solidarity. Polish-language editions of the AFL-CIO *Free Trade Union News* were printed and smuggled into Poland for distribution to Solidarity leaders but not to the rank-and-file (see Kelly, 1981:11–12).

In an interview with the *Washington Post* on October 4, 1981, Walesa, appealing for U.S. assistance, stated, "Poland may not appear a profitable investment for you now. But if we can succeed with what we are doing here, it will benefit you in the long run" (*Washington Post*, October 4, 1981). A few days before the government declared martial law, Walesa, at a national meeting of Solidarity leaders held in Radom, stated:

Confrontation is inevitable and it will take place. I wanted to get to this confrontation in a natural way, when virtually all social groups would be with us. However, I have miscalculated. . . . I thought that we would progress further and that we would then overthrow this parliament, those councils and so forth. It turns out that we will not move along this road any further. So we are picking a road for a lightning-speed maneuver. . . .

After all, let us realize that we are bringing this system down. Let us at last realize this. If we agree to have private shopkeeping, buy up state farms, and ensure complete self-management, this system will cease to exist. . . .

We should not say aloud that a confrontation is unavoidable. . . . We must say we love you, we love socialism and the party, and obviously, the Soviet Union. But at the same time we must keep doing our work through faiths accompli and wait. . . .

People must be taken into confidence to some extent and told what game we are playing. They should be told that we are playing for such high stakes that we are changing realities in general and this game can only end in one way. No change of system can take place without blows being exchanged. . . . (cited in *Washington Post*, December 20, 1981)

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<sup>\*</sup>Brown worked closely with the U.S. intelligence service after World War II to eliminate Communist influence from the West German union movement (Kelly, 1981:11–12).

The Gdansk national convention in September was highly confrontational. The official congress poster pictured a one-year-old child in a Solidarity T-shirt, wielding a big stick. Resolutions were passed demanding "free and democratic" elections to the Sejm, "social control" over the mass media, and fundamental changes in the schools and in history textbooks. The congress sent an official message to workers in other Eastern European countries, encouraging them to follow Solidarity's lead in establishing organizations like itself. One delegate, referring to the pledge of August 1980 to respect the leading role of the Communist Party in Polish society, argued that the pledge was now "a little absurd when we are fighting most of the Party's ideas." When asked what would happen if the Sejm ignored Solidarity's demand for a national referendum on self-management, Bogdan Lis, at the time one of the top leaders of the organization and very close to Walesa, said, "Maybe we will dissolve it." Solidarity also promised to hold the referendum with or without official government sponsorship (*New York Times*, September 13, 1981).

In general, over the course of the fall the attitude among Solidarity leaders became oriented to overthrowing the regime and removing Poland from the Warsaw Pact. At the National Congress of Solidarity in September, a vocal anti-Communist trend became prominent. One delegate argued, "This union was not created to make compromises, but to smash the totalitarian system in our country" (cited in *Worker's World*, December 25, 1981). Walesa maintained in September, "Things have reached a stage where the authorities are losing social acceptance and social support. The situation forces us to take upon ourselves responsibility for the fate of the nation" (*Wall Street Journal*, September 4, 1981).

During 1981 the influence of young anti-Communist intellectuals grew in Solidarity. Of the 892 delegates to the first session of the Solidarity National Congress at Gdansk in September, 70 percent were from the intelligentsia—mostly professors, scientists, engineers, writers—while most of the rest were, like Walesa himself, technicians. There were very few manual workers. Further, it has been estimated that almost 40 percent of Solidarity members were under 30. Almost all of the organization's leaders were in their thirties (see *Wall Street Journal*, September 10, 1981). Further, most of both the national and the regional leadership of Solidarity that emerged during late 1980 and 1981 tended to be from the intelligen-



tsia (see MacDonald 1983:18). The intelligentsia, increasingly representing its own ideology and interests, thus came to take over the organization from its original largely working-class and technician base with its reformist trade union orientation.

The *Wall Street Journal* quoted a long-time associate of Walesa, Stanislaw Bury, a mechanic at the Gdansk shipyard, where Walesa had worked before 1976, as complaining about the intellectuals' takeover of Solidarity leadership:

Mr. Bury laments that nearly 70 percent of the congress delegates come from white collar jobs, as it was the workers who gave Solidarity its original impetus. "We do need wise men to help us understand the pile of papers, but we now have some groups within Solidarity who don't have anything in common with the interest of the workers. They are fighting for power to direct the union."

Says Mr. Bury: "The intellectuals say Lech isn't smooth enough, refined enough or diplomatic enough. But he speaks our language and understands our needs." He says union leaders should continue to show the toughness and directness represented by the rank and file.

"We don't need polemics," Mr. Bury says. "We understand just two answers: yes and no." (September 10, 1981)

Western reporters heard considerable rumbling at the Solidarity National Congress about heavy-handed and bureaucratic procedures and structures. To quote the *Wall Street Journal*:

Many delegates at the congress complained that some of their leaders were trying to rush them into voting for resolutions they didn't completely understand. . . .

It took five minutes to push through the most provocative and controversial resolution of the first congress—an open letter to the people of Eastern Europe offering Solidarity's support for the creation of free trade unions throughout the Soviet bloc.

Delegates in the Olivia Congress Hall here appeared surprised when the fiery language appeared unexpectedly between dull motions and procedural arguments. None had a copy of the letter and all were hearing it for the first time.

Before the matter could be debated, Andrzej Gwiazda—the most radical member of Solidarity's presidium and perhaps the second most important Solidarity leader . . . moved that a vote be taken immediately and that discussion be dispensed with. . . .

Said a delegate from Cracow, "Some members of Solidarity try to rush through matters that perhaps should be given more thought. This movement was born at the grass roots and it should continue to be ruled from the grass roots." (*Wall Street Journal*, September 28, 1981)

Among those who emerged as power figures in Solidarity during 1981 were Andrzej Gwiazda, who in the fall was the vice-chairman of the organization. Gwiazda, a 42-year-old electronics engineer, became one of the principal "radical" opponents of Walesa's relatively moderate policies. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, "While Mr. Walesa's charismatic appeal is tailored for the masses, Mr. Gwiazda reaches the intellectuals behind the union's ideology" (*Wall Street Journal*, September 8, 1981).

Another powerful figure who emerged at the Gdansk convention was Grzegorz Palka, a 31-year-old chemistry professor. He wrote the resolution calling for a factory referendum on self-management, presenting outspoken economic views throughout the congress. Speaking of Solidarity, he said, "We must in a very short period of time get control over the economy. The situation is critical" (*Wall Street Journal*, October 6, 1981; October 9, 1981). Over Walesa's opposition, Palka was elected, with more votes than anyone else, to the 12-member presidium of the Solidarity National Commission and was made responsible for negotiating with the government on economic policy.

There was "violent debate" at the September National Congress between the relatively moderate and the more extreme economic advisers of Solidarity. The draft economic plan adopted by the congress was, in good part, prepared by the economist Ryszard Bugaj, who argued, "There has to be a balance of what we want and what we are able to achieve. We must state very openly to people that miracles don't exist." The plan supported by Bugaj and adopted by the congress called for "dismantling most central directives and seeks to make enterprises self-financed entities whose strategies and product mixes are shaped by market forces rather than by state plans."

The second most influential economist in Solidarity was Stefan Kurowski, a bitter opponent of Bugaj who, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, "wanted Poland's entire economic system to be changed, not in progressive steps but with one big sweep of capitalism." Kurowski was quoted as stating, "The time is very limited.



There will be very high social and political costs if this crisis lasts for years. The direct influence and interference of political parties in economic activities should be liquidated." Kurowski's plan, supported by the most militant wing of Solidarity, called for "dismantling branch ministries and middle level planning agencies to erase the government's means of central economic control" and "opening up the market to private and foreign capital" (*Wall Street Journal*, October 7, 1981).

### The Church and the Crisis

Although part of the de facto coalition behind Solidarity and against the Party during 1980–81, the Church maneuvered for position against other forces, especially the Social Democratic secular intellectuals around KOR. The Church asserted itself as a strong defender of the peasants. In early 1981 the hierarchy actively supported the sit-in for the registration of Rural Solidarity and refused to mediate in industrial disputes until the peasant union was recognized. It also emphasized the enhancement of its own position—for instance, pushing for time on television and radio, the expansion of the Church press, and the construction of more churches. Its position within Solidarity was rather less adventurous than that of the KOR leaders, especially in the fall of 1981. In fact, it offered itself as "mediator" between the Solidarity leadership and the Party. Not surprisingly the hierarchy was willing to become part of a tripartite coalition to govern Poland. Its position within the Solidarity movement generally tended to be to push the leadership away from provocative political confrontations and challenges to the Party's political hegemony, and away from actions that might precipitate a Soviet intervention. It preferred, rather, a process of steady and gradual erosion of the Party's position and the slow growth of its own power and position (see MacDonald, 1983:27).

Catholic intellectuals played a decisive role in influencing the working class and shaping the Gdansk agreement, especially its provisions about allowing the Church access to the media. Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the editor of a Catholic magazine, played the central role in the long struggle with the government over registration of the union (*New York Times*, November 16, 1980:sec. 4). Walesa, in fact, referred to Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, the late primate of the

Polish Church, as "my number one advisor" (Dobbs et al., 1981:118).

Through their influence on Solidarity leadership, the Church intellectuals and the Catholic hierarchy were able to win a number of major concessions from the state. For the first time, as a result of the Gdansk agreements, the mass was broadcast on television. Nuns were reintroduced in state hospitals as nurses. Religious courses were once again taught in the schools, while courses in Marxism were cut back. Most Church newspapers were allowed to double their print runs, Church book publishing tripled, and church construction was accelerated (see *Wall Street Journal*, December 15, 1981).

While the Social Democratic intellectuals generally pressed for the escalation of the struggle against the Party, hoping for ever bigger confrontations, the Catholic intellectuals generally advised more caution, tending to recommend the consolidation of gains and, for the most part, to defuse sharp confrontations. The Catholic intellectuals gradually became more confrontationist, increasingly willing to advise the escalation of demands beyond limited economic gains and expanded rights for the Church.

The editor of the Gdansk-area Solidarity weekly, Arkdeusz Rybicki, a conservative Catholic, advocated the formation of a Christian Democratic Party closely aligned with the Roman Catholic Church. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, which interviewed Rybicki:

The accent would be on Polish patriotism and the goal would be greater Polish independence. "It wouldn't be for everyone," Mr. Rybicki concedes, "but would be one of a spectrum of political choices. The ideas are planted and only need to mature." (October 26, 1981)

The influence of the Church became pervasive. Lech Walesa, a practicing Catholic for all but two years of his life, on August 31, 1980, signed the Gdansk agreement, which recognized independent trade unions, with an oversize souvenir pen with the Pope's portrait (from Pope John Paul II's visit to Poland in the summer of 1979). Solidarity increasingly associated itself with both Catholic and traditional nationalist symbols. At the Solidarity National Congress held in September 1981, both a crucifix and the traditional Polish eagle adorned the podium. The delegates opened the congress with the



singing of both the national anthem and a religious hymn. Walesa himself was never seen without a badge of the Madonna of Czestochowa, the patron saint of Poland, on his lapel. He also was known to grow hoarse from singing the national anthem (see Paul and Simon, 1981:33; Dobbs et al., 1981:107).

More than ever before, the Church hierarchy and Catholic intellectuals served as an alternative interpreter of the frustrations of the people, thereby providing an alternative ideology and leadership to that of the Party, especially in times of crisis. For example, Lech Walesa stated after the forming of Solidarity, "If it hadn't been for the Church, none of this would have happened. Apart from everything else, I wouldn't be what I am" (Dobbs et al., 1981:98).

Both the Polish hierarchy and Pope John Paul II have given active support to Solidarity. The Pope referred to Solidarity five times in his 1982 New Year's message, stating that the union had become an integral part of the "heritage of the workers of Poland and of other nations." In response to Solidarity banners raised by the crowd, the Pope stated, "I see here in St. Peter's Square many inscriptions 'Solidarnosc.' Thank you for these expressions of solidarity with Solidarnosc. This word is the expression of a great effort that the workers of my homeland have made to secure the real dignity of workers." The Pope and the Polish hierarchy's support of a union was unprecedented in the history of the Polish workers' movement and, given the long conservative history of the Polish Church, must be suspect (see *New York Times*, January 2, 1982).

According to the *Wall Street Journal*:

A high-ranking Western diplomat in Warsaw, who recently met with Archbishop Glemp, says that even before Sunday's imposition of martial law the primate had been growing pessimistic; he was said to feel that the church had to commit all the authority of Catholic tradition and doctrine to some attempted solution, even at the obvious risk of having to share responsibility for the outcome.

In a recent sermon in Wroclaw, Archbishop Glemp explained: "The Church isn't for making politics . . . but the Church cannot be absent where the cause of the nation is at stake."

The increasing Church activism of recent weeks seems, at the least, to have the blessing of Pope John Paul II. Archbishop Glemp spent six days with the Pope at the Vatican in early No-

vember, and some Poles suspect that the idea of the triumphant meeting with Gen. Jaruzelski and Mr. Walesa was conceived by the Pope.

The four Warsaw-Rome flights each week have been shuttling an increasing number of bishops and priests and a sort of Curia courier service between the Pope and the Polish episcopate. Church officials say that the Pope these days has been spending most of his lunches and dinners talking with visitors from the Polish Church, Polish government and Solidarity. (*Wall Street Journal*, December 15, 1981)

The Catholic Church and its intellectuals intervened, both before and after the summer of 1980, in favor of the peasant small landholders, who largely regarded the Church as their champion. In the last years of the 1970s discontent among the small landholders grew, aggravated by the accelerating economic crisis and the increasingly aggressive stance of the Catholic hierarchy. During 1978 a peasant movement against required payments into the new social security system began. In some of the eastern districts "farmers' self-defense committees" sprang up. These were typically supported by the village priests and assisted by the emerging KOR publicity network. In 1979 "peasants' centers for knowledge" appeared that taught courses in the tradition of the old populist and pro-Western Peasants' Party, and organized discussions designed to aggravate peasant grievances (Ascherson, 1981:140).

Peasant discontent was in good part directed against the social security system introduced by the state in 1978. Peasants for the first time became eligible for retirement pensions on a scale comparable with that of urban workers, providing they had sold a certain minimum amount of products to the state during previous years and had made payments into the social security fund equal to about one-third of the value of benefits (two-thirds of the costs of the new pension plan were picked up by the state). Although this new pension plan went a long way toward putting private landowning peasants on the same basis as workers regarding pensions, it did not offer the same benefits in terms of partial disability payments, payments for non-work-related illnesses, child benefits, family allowances, survivors' pensions, or adjustments for inflation (Simanis, 1983).

The new pension program provoked discontent among the peasants, who wanted benefits equal to those of workers and a guarantee that the smallest benefits would be at the "social minimum" (al-



though they were private landowners). They also resented the requirement of deliveries to the state, instituted by the state in order to increase food supplies, and felt that the required contributions to the pension fund were too high, even though they represented only one-third of the costs of benefits. After Gdansk, demands for pension reform became a central issue of the peasant movement for a rural Solidarity (Simanis, 1983).

In addition to the demand for social security benefits on the same basis as industrial workers, Rural Solidarity demanded a lowering of the retirement age to 60 for men and 55 for women, liberalization of the rules regarding the inheritance and sale of farms (the existing rules prohibited the transfer of a farm to anyone over 55 or inheritance by children living in urban areas), state recognition of the legitimacy of private farming, and a program to provide cheap agricultural implements to farmers (Simanis, 1983:21).

In late 1980 a strong movement for a peasant Solidarity, which demanded higher food prices and absolute guarantees of private ownership of the land, as well as a reform of the pension system, sprang up in much of the countryside. This movement was particularly strongly backed by the Catholic Church, which put its full weight behind the movement for a farmers' union. The movement peaked in the winter of 1981, with Rural Solidarity finally recognized by the state in March 1981, after a major confrontation. The Church further increased its prestige among small landholders because of its role in securing victory for their organization.

### The Party and the Crisis

The Party and its leaders have more support in Poland than the Western press leads people to believe. According to public opinion polls, about one-third of Poles in 1981 expressed confidence in the Party as an institution (Paul and Simon, 1981:37). Polish surveys consistently find that about one-third of Poles stand with the Party no matter what, one-third oppose it as a matter of principle, and about one-third shift from support to opposition, depending on the issues and the general public mood. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Party experienced a serious failure (if not collapse) of its authority over the course of the 1968–81 period along with a legitimization crisis of Marxist–Leninist ideology.

The Party's support has been especially strong in the urban working class. From the beginning of the 1960s until the mid-1970s, the social composition of the Polish United Workers' Party averaged about 40–41 percent blue-collar workers and 43–44 percent intelligentsia and white-collar workers. These long-term averages were down from the 60 percent workers and 17 percent intelligentsia plus white-collar workers in 1948 and 45 percent and 39 percent figures for 1955 (see Shoup, 1981:91–93). The number of blue-collar workers decreased from 876,000 in December 1948, right after the merger of the Socialist and Communist parties, to 553,000 in December 1952. It grew steadily throughout the remainder of the 1950s, the 1960s, and the 1970s, however. In December 1955 there were 606,000 worker members; in December 1965, 760,000; and in June 1975, 965,000. Meanwhile, the proportion of the Party that was peasant declined from 18 percent in 1948 to 13 percent in 1955, 12 percent in 1966, and 10 percent in 1975. Thus it is clear that the Party has maintained substantial strength in the Polish working class, especially among urban industrial workers; that the working class has maintained a substantial proportion of total Party membership, and thus, presumably, substantial direct influence within the Party organization; and that the intelligentsia grew substantially in Party representation, and presumably influence, during 1948–60, retaining a powerful position within the Party through the events of 1980–81.

In the late 1970s the Party was most successful in its emphasis on recruiting working-class members, especially young skilled workers. By 1979, 46 percent of all members, a total of 1,403,000, were working-class (Woodall, 1982:56)—as high as in any Eastern European socialist country. The proportion of all blue-collar workers who were in the Party grew during the 1960s and 1970s. While in 1960, 10 percent of all blue-collar workers were Party members, in 1970, 14 percent, and in 1979, 17 percent (one out of every six blue-collar workers) was a Party member (see Shoup, 1981:91–93, 239). The working-class membership of the PUWP was concentrated in the largest industrial enterprises—27 percent were in the 164 largest industrial enterprises (MacDonald, 1983:12).

Recruitment campaigns in the 1970s increasingly stressed meeting quantitative criteria designed to achieve a desired class composition with a reduced emphasis on either the political commitment and activities of members or on their political education after recruit-



ment, a policy that reflected the leaders' all-around technical orientation. Thus, large numbers of the young workers recruited during the 1970s had relatively little in-depth understanding of, or ideological commitment to, Marxism–Leninism, even though they shared its general orientation to advancing both the long-term goals of socialism and the immediate concerns of the working class (see Woodall, 1982:56). These members were susceptible, because of their background, to non-Marxist influences.

The Communist Party worker activists in the factories generally have had the respect of most of the other workers. Unlike the trade unions, which were generally regarded as tools of enterprise management and of little use to defend workers in conflict with other groups, the local plant Party organizations were generally regarded as supportive of immediate worker interests by the bulk of workers (see MacDonald, 1983:12). Evaluating the attitudes of Party activists in the plants, Jan Litynski, a leading KOR activist, argued:

They are convinced that it is the workers who rule Poland—the term “rule” expressing both their need for prestige (workers sit on the executive committee) and a genuine feeling of responsibility for the fate of the country. However they feel tied to the cause of the working class, not hesitating to show their solidarity with strike movements, and even take the head of such movements by turning to account their organizational experience they acquired in the Party. (cited in MacDonald, 1983:12)

The Communist Party also maintains respectable peasant support and membership. Its strength among peasants relative to the strength of the United Peasants' Party is greatest among the smallest landholders and least among the larger landholders. In 1965, 4.4 percent of land holders with less than two hectares were members of the Communist Party, compared with 3.1 percent who were members of the United Peasants' Party; 4.1 percent of peasants with more than 10 hectares were Communists, compared to 7.0 percent who belonged to the United Peasants' Party (see Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:60, 61, 332; Dziewanowski, 1976:325).

The dominant day-to-day force in the Party after 1960 appears to have been the intelligentsia, especially those associated with the enterprise management, state administration, and Party officials. Such people tended to use the Party apparatus to advance what became their increasingly technocratic vision of socialism as well as, in

many cases, their own petty privileges. In contrast with the early years of Socialist Poland, when it was normal for workers to be promoted directly into management and administrative positions because of their politics and commitment to building socialism, in the 1960s and 1970s it became the norm for administrative and managerial positions to be filled by university graduates who had spent their entire "careers" in such positions, although a very large proportion of them had working-class or peasant parents. They thus tended to form both a new, more or less petty bourgeois class and a special-interest group (see Woodall, 1982:58).

After the revolution it became the norm for all important political and administrative positions to be filled by Party members or those whose politics were compatible with those of the Party. The standard Communist practice of *nomenklatura*, which required the relevant Party organization to approve candidates for important positions, was thus established. By the late 1970s the incumbents of 180,000 sensitive positions were subject to evaluation by the Party organization, and in fact were usually Party members (Woodall, 1982:58).

While in the beginning the system of *nomenklatura* was an important device to ensure that the society's leaders were held accountable to the working class and that their political orientation predominated over either careerism or expertise, over the years the system was in part corrupted. Increasingly a motive for joining the Party became the possibility of promotion to leading positions and advancing various nonpolitical goals, which the *nomenklatura* system allowed. The growing role of opportunism among the intelligentsia members of the Party tended to undermine the Party's popular legitimacy (see Woodall, 1982:58).

The career and technocratic orientation of large numbers of administrators and managers, in contrast with the political orientation of their predecessors of the 1940s and 1950s, led to the growth of an increasingly uncritical and non-ideological orientation among officials. Promotional opportunities became increasingly dependent on pleasing one's superiors in the Party and state apparatus, and on proving one's technical expertise, and decreasingly on one's ties to the working class or political activism. The depoliticization of the Party and state apparatuses was associated with their increasingly technocratic orientation—with the growing focus on "modernization" and rapid economic growth, which came to be seen, especially in the



Gierek years, as the panacea for all of Poland's and the Party's problems. The Party's congresses and Central Committee meetings came increasingly to focus on technical rather than ideological questions. For example, during the 1970s only three general meetings of the Party's Central Committee (plena) were devoted to ideological matters (Woodall, 1982:58).

The central role of economic progress and the declining role of political enthusiasm within the Party and state officialdom resulted in demoralization in the face of economic crisis. In the words of one observer:

It was not surprising that morale in the PUWP was rotting away. What, now, was the nature of the Party's mission? Ideological commitment had paradoxically declined as the educational level of the Party bureaucracy improved. Gomulka had found the Party talking feverishly about ideas and left it a party so overwhelmingly preoccupied with economic management that it scarcely understood that politics still existed in Poland. Thus, the terrible economic failure of the later 1970s shattered the Party's self-confidence as completely as the thrilling surge in consumption a few years earlier had made the comrades feel infallible. (Ascherson, 1981:135)

The leadership of the Party in the 1970s, and during the 1980 crisis, was composed mostly of rather nonpolitical, pragmatic, and technocratically oriented individuals who were astute at compromise, manipulation, and minimizing risks, rather than ideologically committed revolutionaries who were willing to sacrifice and could inspire confidence to build a socialist Poland, as their predecessors of the 1940s and 1950s had been. Again in the words of Ascherson:

. . . there was a gradual decline in the quality of the people at the top. It is enough to glance back at one's notes from press conferences almost two decades before to register this change: what had become of those tough, witty men, confident that Marxism was resilient enough to be adapted to any situation, who held leading positions in the early 1960s. (Ascherson: 1981:135–36)

In summary, a polarization developed within the Party between its intelligentsia members, oriented increasingly to career, economic development by technical means, and accumulating petty privileges

for themselves, and its increasingly young working-class membership, which, although not as ideologically motivated as their fathers, were committed to advancing working-class concerns and interests. The unifying element between these two poles of the Party was (at least nominal) adherence to the official Marxism-Leninism of the Party—a commitment that meant different things to different people.

Before the 1980 crisis the Party's working-class membership had made considerable efforts to represent the concerns of blue-collar workers to the Party's leadership, with less-than-satisfactory results. Frustration with working from within against the technically oriented, largely intelligentsia leadership led to a high percentage of the Party's rank-and-file working-class members, especially among the young, more recently recruited members, joining, initiating, and leading the early Solidarity activities in the factories. (During that period Solidarity activities did not seem to threaten either Polish socialism or the Party's leading role in society.)

In fact, during the early months of Solidarity, the majority of at least the younger Party members in the larger factories appeared to have put the bulk of their energy into Solidarity-related activities, rather than into working within the Party (MacDonald, 1983:18). A Gdansk Solidarity leader estimated that in December 1980, about 50 percent of regional Solidarity activists were Communist Party members (MacDonald, 1983:18). About one-third of the delegates to the interfactory strike committee in Gdansk were estimated to be Party members. Party members seem to have been equally central to early Solidarity activities in Szczecin and in at least two of the key mining areas of Silesia (Walbrzych and Jastrzebie) as well as in Wroclaw, Poznan, and Torun (see MacDonald, 1983:15).

Typical of the attitude of the Party members who were active in building Solidarity during its early stages was that expressed by Edward Pustelniak, a Central Committee member from the Szczecin repair shipyard:

As a worker and as a member of the party, I have to say that there are certain things that I do not understand. Because when all is said and done, the majority of the problems at present being raised by the strikers have already been raised several times within party meetings, in particular in the meetings preparatory to the 8th Congress of the PZPR. The non-party members knew



this and they supported us; furthermore, they believed that our voices would finally be listened to. Unfortunately this proved not to be the case. . . . But to carry on like this gives the lie to what we have been saying and repeating in public, namely that the party listens to the opinions of its members, as well as those of non-party members, and that it draws from these opinions the necessary conclusions. (cited in MacDonald, 1983:15)

In the fall of 1980 a movement developed in the Party that began pressing for the "democratization" of the Party—the general upheaval within Polish society also affected the Party. The main form taken by this movement was "horizontalism," the meeting of delegates from various Party organizations, without mediation by higher Party bodies, in order to work out common programs and requests of higher Party bodies. The first manifestation of "horizontalism" was in Torun, where in late October 1980 eight of the largest regional Party organizations met with the university Party group. The events in Torun inspired similar activities elsewhere in Poland.

The "horizontalist" movement was not based on a common program, nor should it be understood as a simple revolt of the Party's base against its leadership. The sole criterion for a Party organization joining a "horizontalist" structure was that it elected its first secretary by a secret ballot after opportunity for a contest (see MacDonald, 1983:37). The thrust of the horizontalists was the "internal democratization" of Party life and cooperation with the Solidarity movement. In addition to many local factory organizations (which usually were composed mostly of younger workers), many Party intellectuals, especially those in the social sciences, were involved in this movement (see MacDonald, 1983:37; Ascherson, 1981:201).

Among the programmatic demands emerging from the horizontalist meetings were that there be rotation of all Party officeholders, the separation of the Party from the state, the making of political policy by elected Party bodies rather than by individual officials, contested elections for all Party positions, secret ballots, voting only by delegations elected from below, open meetings, and the exchange of views and information among Party bodies without the mediation of higher Party bodies (see Woodall, 1982:64; Ascherson, 1981:202). In general, the thrust of these demands was populist and ultrademocratic—an understandable response to the bureaucratization of Party life.

By December 1980 "horizontal" Party bodies were meeting in 17 out of Poland's 49 districts. Horizontalist organizations also began appearing on a functional as well as a regional basis. For example, 15,000 Party members in design offices moved to formulate their own proposals for the expected Party congress. Party organizations in the universities also met to develop proposals for the Party congress (Woodall, 1982:65; Ascherson, 1981:202). In April 1981 delegates representing approximately half a million Party members held a national conference in Torun. This meeting of "horizontalists" called for "internal democratization" of Party life and for a Party congress, to be held as soon as possible, that would elect a new leadership and adopt a new program (which would be compatible with the thrust of the early Solidarity movement) (MacDonald, 1983:38). This rank-and-file movement put considerable pressure on the top Party leadership to assent to its demands (see MacDonald, 1983:24).

In December 1980, at the seventh plenum of the Central Committee, new procedures for electing Party officials at the factory level were adopted that guaranteed the inclusion of candidates nominated from the rank and file, multiple candidates, and the secret ballot. The elections held under these new procedures produced a radical turnover of local Party leadership. Seventy percent of local first secretaries were new, as were 50 percent of Party executives. However, only 25-30 percent of the newly elected Party leaders were manual workers—the intelligentsia heavily predominated (Woodall, 1982: 60-61, 69). Similar rules were adopted for the election of delegates to the Ninth Party Congress, held in July 1981.

The elections for the Ninth Party Congress involved an open and intense struggle among the different tendencies within the Party. This election process tended to select out both hard-liners and pro-Solidarity Party members, as well as to produce a radical change in the Party leadership. Only 71 out of the 236 members of the Party's Central Committee were elected as delegates to the congress (and thus were eligible for election to the new Central Committee). Even some members of the Politburo were unable to be elected as delegates, although most of its principal figures were successful (see Woodall, 1982:50). Large factory organizations and the universities directly elected their delegates, while smaller units and other local Party organizations elected intermediate bodies that in turn selected delegates.



That the process of secret ballot and multiple-candidate selection procedures eliminated most of the leaders of the "horizontalist" movement as well as many of the old-time Party leaders, indicated that the majority of Party members favored a moderate rather than an extreme approach to dealing with Poland's crisis (see Woodhall, 1982:71). Most of the delegates elected to the Party Congress were from the intelligentsia—managers, engineers, technicians; only 22 percent of all elected delegates to the Ninth Congress were manual workers directly employed in production, construction, or services (Woodall, 1982:70–71). Thus, the Party Congress was dominated by the reform-minded, but moderate Party intelligentsia—Kania, Kazimierz Barcikowski, and Jaruzelski—were typical of these new leaders, falling midway between the pro-Solidarity and pro-Soviet tendencies within the Party (Woodall, 1982:36).

The new congress produced a thorough overturning of the Party's top leadership. Only 18 of the 236 members of the outgoing Central Committee were reelected, and only 3 of the outgoing 19 Politburo members were elected to the new Politburo: Kania, Jaruzelski, and Barcikowski (Woodall, 1982:40, 41, 52). Both the pro-Solidarity wing of the Party, led by Fiszbach, and the hard-line pro-Soviets, led by Grabski, failed to be elected to the new Politburo (Woodall, 1982:52). The renewal of the top Party leadership organizations thus, like the congress itself, produced a moderate, reform-oriented leadership acceptable to both the rank and file and the Soviets.

The Party Congress also approved new Party statutes that limited the time a Party official could occupy a Party or state office to ten years, provided for the secret ballot and direct nominations in all Party elections, guaranteed the right of Party members to express dissenting views (although their actions had to support the majority decision), and gave the congress delegates the right to recall the elected leadership at any time before the next Party Congress (Ascherson, 1981:271).

It is of interest that relatively few workers left the Party between August 1980 and the Ninth Party Congress in July 1981. About 180,000 of the 1 million working-class members resigned, while about 10 percent of total Party members left the organization. However, Party membership did decline by another 500,000 between July and December as the sharp polarization between Solidarity and

the Party developed. Solidarity, too, as will be seen, declined significantly in its support after its September convention in Gdansk (see MacDonald, 1983:37; Woodall, 1982:57). It appears that significant numbers on both sides dropped out of the contest, while some who had their feet in both camps before the July and September conventions of the two leading organizations had to choose one side or the other.

Beginning in September 1980 and culminating with actions taken at the Ninth Congress, the Party underwent a fairly thorough purge of those involved in corruption during the Gierek years. "Socialist renewal" became the guiding phrase. The Party's Central Control Commission set to work to expose abuses. Headed by the "hard-liner" Grabski, it investigated 16,014 cases of alleged abuses, confirming guilt in 4,990. It also unqualifiedly condemned the Gierek leadership, recommending expulsion for Gierek and many of the top figures in his administration—an action implemented at the Ninth Congress. Criminal proceedings were initiated against those guilty of the most serious corruption and abuses, some of whom received stiff jail sentences for the misdirection and private appropriation of state funds for their personal use (Woodall, 1982:43, 51–52). A special committee was also set up to investigate and report on the causes of the 1980 crisis.

General Wojciech Jaruzelski, who had been defense minister since 1968, was appointed prime minister in February 1981. According to public opinion polls, his appointment was approved by 85 percent of Poles. In the words of a Polish social scientist, "There was widespread hope that General Jaruzelski would be a good Prime Minister and his appeal for 90 days of peace won almost unanimous support" (Kurczewski, 1981:23).

On October 18, Stanislaw Kania resigned as first secretary of the Party, and was replaced by Jaruzelski, who now held three of the most important positions in Polish society: head of the Party, state, and military. Jaruzelski had a substantial reputation as a moderate, midway between the pro-Solidarity and "hard-line" forces, and was exceptionally popular both within the Party and in society at large. He had the prestige of the army behind him and thus could mobilize Polish nationalism in a way difficult for other Party leaders. He opened discussion with the top leadership of both the Church and Solidarity for an institutional solution to the crisis. Jaruzelski pre-



sented himself as the upholder of national unity, national welfare, and national independence who was supportive of major reforms within the society and economy as well as compromise with the Church and Solidarity (see MacDonald, 1983:33, 42). He warned, however, that the alternative to compromise would be martial law. He came increasingly to accuse the new Solidarity leadership of being a force for chaos and national disintegration as it assumed an ever more confrontationalist and uncompromising course. He was able to keep the support of a large segment of Polish public opinion.

### The Events of December 1981

At about the time of the Gdansk congress of Solidarity, Jacek Kuron, Walesa's principal adviser, began calling for a transfer of state power:

One union advisor, Jacek Kuron, called for the creation of a Council of National Salvation—including representatives of Solidarity, the Communist Party, the Roman Catholic Church and the government—to take charge from the current authorities, whom he described as too weak and distrusted to make decisions.

"The old system broke down and the new one hasn't been formed," he said. "We are in the position of a total lack of management in all spheres of life." (*Wall Street Journal*, September 17, 1981)

Kuron appears to have played the key catalytic role at the crucial Radom meeting of Solidarity's leaders, held in early December 1981, in mobilizing a majority, over the opposition of Walesa, for a militant confrontation with the regime on the question of state power. To quote the *Washington Post*:

The trade union's tactics emerged during this "creative" discussion. They were formulated by its advisor and leading strategist Jacek Kuron. He stressed the view that the confrontation area should include the question of elections, of a new election procedure, of complete opposition to the so-called government provisional arrangement and a "state of emergency." (*Washington Post*, December 20, 1981)

In response to an interviewer's question about the goals of Solidarity, Kuron maintained:

We are in a special situation today, because the country's situation is really tragic. Solidarity has tremendous power. It must no longer hesitate, it must show the way out of the crisis. It is no longer just a question of reforms, but of a solution. (cited in Persky and Flam, 1982:135)

The Gdansk convention and the events of the succeeding three months revealed a major split within the Solidarity organization. Three "radical" regional leaders—Gwiazda from Gdansk, Marian Jurczyk from Szczecin, and Jan Rulewski from Bydgoszcz—ran against Walesa for the organization's presidency and together won 45 percent of the vote. Walesa's radical opponents wanted the organization to directly confront the Party for leadership of Polish society, thus completing Solidarity's transformation away from a trade union representing workers' economic interests. The radicals were enraged at Walesa for agreeing to a compromise proposal with the government on the election of enterprise managers, and for his moderation in dealing with the Party. They thought that the time for compromise was over and that Solidarity now ought to lead the total transformation of Polish society.

The strongly anti-Party radicals did, however, win the majority of the seats on Solidarity's National Commission and succeeded in writing its program. Most moderates, including a number of Catholic intellectuals who had been counseling moderation, were knocked off the organization's policy-making body (see Barker and Weber, 1982:58–60). According to one Western socialist journalist:

The radical current of the union has decisively oriented the second phase of the Congress, conceding to the moderate wing which practically ran the union over the last year the presidency of Walesa only. Solidarity has a National Commission majority independent of the Church . . . and a radical programme. (cited in Barker and Weber, 1982:60)

The program and politics of the largely intelligentsia-based radicals who effectively assumed leadership of Solidarity at its September–October National Congress, in addition to its anti-Communist



nism and promarket and pro-Western orientation, could perhaps be described as a variety of anarcho-syndicalism. Great emphasis was given to decentralized "self-management" and direct elections, unimpeded by centralized mechanisms, to ensure coordination or long-term direction. Trade unionism and attempts to reform the system from within were given up. It was decided to attempt the overthrow of the existing organization of Polish society and totally reorganize both the economy and the political institutions. This vision was incorporated within the program adopted in October 1981 (see MacDonald 1983:23, 39).

It must be emphasized that the majority of Solidarity's working-class base was never won over to the radical anti-Communist ideas of the Solidarity intellectuals. It appears that most of its working-class members and sympathizers wanted Solidarity to limit itself largely to trade union concerns, supplemented by a few nonsystematic demands, and not to bring down the regime (see MacDonald, 1983:46).

The notion of a tripartite "Church, Solidarity, Party" interim government gained considerable support among Solidarity's inner core of leaders. During the latter part of 1981, more or less from the September national convention in Gdansk to the Radom meeting of Solidarity leaders in early December 1981, the leadership became increasingly committed to fundamentally challenging the institutions of Polish socialism. Jan Rulewski, Solidarity leader from Bydgoszcz, stated at the December 3, 1981, meeting in Radom:

The coming six months are needed to ensure a provisional arrangement in the country, but not in the form recently suggested by government circles. . . . Such government should adopt the tactics of the Social Self-Defense Committee [KOR] based not on the openness of contrary political programs but on taking over, hindering and laying bare the party's activities. (cited in *Washington Post*, December 20, 1981:B5)

On December 12, 1981, Solidarity leaders meeting in Gdansk proposed that a nationwide referendum be held by the end of the month on setting up a non-Communist government and redefining the country's military relation with the Soviet Union—that is, a referendum on Poland's continued membership in the Warsaw Pact, the most sensitive of all issues to the Soviets. There was a strong possibil-

ity that had such a referendum been held in the conditions of December 1981, some kind of anti-Communist Christian Democratic/Social Democratic coalition government, which would have withdrawn from the Warsaw Pact, would have emerged. This would have precipitated an immediate and extreme crisis in relations with the Soviet Union, as well as handing U.S. imperialism an immense propaganda and practical victory (see *New York Times*, December 13, 1981).

Solidarity leaders went beyond calls for national referenda and threats of a general strike. They began talking about setting up an armed workers' militia that would be able to advance their goals against the army and police if necessary, as well as preparing for a seizure of power. At the December 3 national meeting of Solidarity leaders, statements such as the following were made:

Grzegorz Palka: "... The Party can delay the confrontation, because it has the power, and "Solidarnosc" (Solidarity) lacks such power. Therefore, we have to create workers' militia which will be armed with helmets and batons." Zbigniew Bujak: "... The first action of the workers' militia will be aimed at the liberation of radio and television headquarters. The social council for national economy must be established immediately. It will be something like a provisional government. The government must be at last overthrown, laid bare, and stripped of all credibility." Seweryn Jaworski to Walesa: "... if you retreat even one step, I will myself cut your head off; and if I don't, someone else will. ... ." (cited in L. Szymański, 1982:56)

Solidarity leaders, in fact, began organizing for the seizure of power. The Lodz organization set December 21 as the date of an active strike in which it would take direct control of production and distribution, with armed "workers' guards" protecting the enterprises (Persky and Flam, 1982:237). In late November, Kuron called a meeting to initiate an organization called Clubs for a Self-Governing Republic, which was raided by the police (Ascherson, 1981:280). Workers at a steel cable factory near Katowice began making weapons out of cable (*New York Times*, December 24, 1981).

To quote the *New York Times*, at the fateful December 3, 1981, Solidarity national leadership meeting, "The meeting hall rang with calls for new tactics, amendments to proposed referendums and



speeches on the need to switch the struggle into a new phase. They all fed the impression that a new confrontation between Solidarity and the authorities was in the offing next week, now that moderates on both sides seem to be losing influence" (*New York Times*, December 13, 1981). A major confrontation with the government had been scheduled by Solidarity for December 17 in Warsaw, where a massive antigovernment demonstration was being organized. Before the declaration of martial law the government spokesman stated that this demonstration "may have unpredictable consequences in the present tense situation in the country" and that "law enforcement agencies will oppose with determination any actions aimed against people's power, in the name of peace for citizens and public order" (cited in the *New York Times*, December 13, 1981).

Such talk and actions quite naturally produced a strong reaction both within the Party and among the leaders of the Polish military. At the plenum of the Party Central Committee held at the end of November 1981, many members demanded that the Jaruzelski regime assume emergency powers. Jaruzelski announced that the Sejm would be asked to grant him the right to declare a state of emergency when he saw fit. Solidarity's response was to threaten a general strike if such a state of emergency were declared (Ascherson, 1981:280; L. Szymański, 1982:117). The escalation of threats, combined with the events at the December 3 Radom conference and other statements and activities of Solidarity leaders, strengthened the position of those in Party and army leadership that a state of emergency would have to be declared and Solidarity repressed with or without Sejm approval.

As the Solidarity leadership moved increasingly into a militant confrontation with the Party and state, it lost much of its popular support because most workers and peasants were growing weary of the economic decline, for which Solidarity's leadership was beginning to take much of the blame, and because large numbers of them did not support the increasingly antistate and anti-Party demands. This was manifested in numerous resignations from Solidarity, especially by those who had maintained dual membership in Solidarity and the Party, the growing weariness of the masses of people, and the failure of the workers' councils movement to take off. According to the *Washington Post*, ". . . the workers' councils are developing more slowly than expected. Solidarity reported last week that only

10 to 20 percent of the factories in large regions had formed workers' councils and the movement appeared even weaker in smaller regions" (December 6, 1981; see also MacDonald 1983:36, 41-46).

Karol Modzelewski, a key leader of both KOR and Solidarity, stated at the December 3, 1981, top-level Solidarity meeting at Radom:

The trade union [Solidarity] has not become stronger, it has become weaker, much weaker, and all activists are aware of this. . . . There are several reasons for this: weariness as a result of crisis, weariness at the end of a line. Some people blame us for the prolongation of this state of affairs. . . . (*Washington Post*, December 20, 1981:B5)

Solidarity's waning popular support was revealed in public opinion polls. On November 8 one poll found that only 30 percent of the people were prepared to consider a general strike "for any purpose whatsoever." A poll taken in Warsaw at the same time found that 26 percent of the population supported the abolition of the right to strike (see MacDonald 1983:41).

The accuracy of Modzelewski's estimate of Solidarity's weakening mass support was shown by the popular response to the martial law declared on December 13. There appeared to be sit-ins or strikes in only about 100 enterprises, mostly in the large mills of the Baltic region, two major coal mines in Silesia, and a smattering of other large industrial enterprises. These largely ineffective protests occurred where there were the largest concentrations of young industrial workers employed under the most socialized conditions—in virtually all countries such enterprises produce the most militant trade unionism, as well as (usually) the core of support for Communists or other left political groups. Leaving the coal mines aside, they were also the most technically advanced enterprises, and thus had a disproportionate concentration of technical intelligentsia, who, like Walesa, provided leadership to the workers. Thus, what resistance occurred, occurred where the technical intelligentsia was the strongest and where working-class militance was the most developed—that is, only under the conditions most favorable for Solidarity. Other than a few demonstrations in the mining towns of Silesia and in Gdansk, little popular opposition was observed anywhere—a somewhat sur-



prising development, given the riots of 1956 and 1970. The army was, in fact, able to install martial law with a minimum of difficulty. Only a few dozen protesters appear to have been killed in the whole of Poland during the clampdown; by historical standards—Chile, Detroit, Watts, or Warsaw on many previous occasions between 1830 and 1945—these deaths reflected both a very low level of resistance and an especially gentle military (see *New York Times*, December 15, 1981; *Wall Street Journal*, December 15, 1981; L. Szymański, 1982:74).

The Polish army, which not only implemented, but also apparently organized, the martial law under the leadership of General Wojciech Jaruzelski, had maintained a fairly high level of popular prestige in Poland (see *New York Times*, December 24, 1981; December 29, 1981). The army's popular prestige had been enhanced by its role over the previous year in attempting to alleviate the economic crisis and uproot corruption and bureaucracy, soldiers having been dispersed all over Poland for this purpose. In fact, a Solidarity publication issued in the industrial city of Katowice in November 1981 stated: "Everyone has been pleasantly surprised that the operational groups are not pulling pigs out of pigsties, but are driving the corrupt local government apparatus to work. It has turned out that indeed the army is looking for anti-socialist elements and is finding them in local governments, in rural retailing cooperatives and also, which no one has anticipated, in local party committees. Carry on, general, but with greater courage" (cited in *New York Times*, November 21, 1981).

Faced with the imminent threat of total economic paralysis and civil war, the Polish military declared martial law on December 13, 1981—by all historical standards a most rational and expected occurrence in such a situation. General Jaruzelski addressed the Polish nation in the following terms:

Our country is on the edge of the abyss. Achievements of many generations, raised from the ashes, are collapsing into ruin. State structures no longer function. New blows are struck each day at our flickering economy. Living conditions are burdening people more and more. . . .

Last night, many public institutions were occupied. There are calls for physical debate with "Reds," with people of different

opinions. There are more and more examples of terror, threats, moral lynching and direct assaults. . . .

Chaos and demoralization have reached the level of defeat. The nation has reached the borderline of mental endurance, many people are desperate. Now not days, but hours separate us from a nationwide catastrophe. . . .

With our aims, it cannot be said that we did not show good will, moderation, patience, and sometimes there was probably too much of it. It cannot be said the Government did not honor the social agreements. We even went further. The initiative of the great national understanding was backed by the millions of Poles. It created a chance, an opportunity to deepen the system of democracy, of people ruling the country, widening the reforms. Those hopes failed.

Around the negotiating table there was no leadership from Solidarity. Words said in Radom and Gdansk showed the real aims of its leadership. These aims are confirmed by everyday practice, growing aggressiveness of the extremists, clearly aiming to take apart the Polish state system.

How long can one wait for a sobering up? How long can a hand reached for accord meet a fist? I say this with a broken heart, with bitterness. It could have been different in our country. It should have been different. But if the current state had lasted longer it would have led to a catastrophe, to absolute chaos, to poverty and starvation. . . .

Despite all the failures and mistakes we made, the party is still the leading and creative force in the process of changes to fulfill its mission sufficiently and cooperate with the allies. To achieve this it must lean on honest, modest and brave people, on those who deserve the name of fighter for social justice in every environment. This will decide the party's authority in society.

This is its perspective. We shall clean up the everlasting sources of our ideals from deformations and deviations. We shall protect universal values of socialism, enriching it with our national elements and tradition. This way the socialist ideals will come closer to the majority of the population, non-party members, the younger generation and the healthy workers' trend in Solidarity, which will move away from the prophets of confrontation by its own strength and its own interest. . . .

Fellow countrymen, before the whole world I want to repeat these immortal words: Poland is not yet lost as long as we live. (*New York Times*, December 14, 1981)



By all indications the initiative for the declaration of martial law came from the military and not from the Politburo of the Polish United Workers' Party (see *New York Times*, December 24, 1981; January 2, 1982). Further, the Military Council of National Salvation, set up to govern Poland, did not place itself under the direction of the Politburo. This unprecedented action was apparently made necessary by the Party's paralysis as well as by its relatively weak legitimacy. The Council of National Salvation proceeded to implement the decentralization reforms earlier agreed to, although it suspended, and eventually permanently banned, the Solidarity organization and the old discredited trade unions, attempting to establish new, semiautonomous unions with a limited right to strike.

During the first year of martial law 10,131 people were interned at one time or another, with the maximum held at any given time 5,300. Most of these were Solidarity leaders, but a few leaders of the discredited 1970–80 regime, including Gierek himself, were also interned. Another 3,616 were arrested for violations of martial law over the course of the year (*New York Times*, December 12, 1982; December 24, 1982).

In January 1983 the report ordered by the July 1981 Party Congress on the causes of the protests of 1956, 1970, 1976, and 1980 became available in draft form. This report, while reaffirming the basic principles of Marxism–Leninism, criticized the way it was put into practice in Poland. It argued that Polish workers were justified in their protests in all four years because “the working people were bearing the burden of poor economic planning by the ruling team.” It continued, “As the crises of 1970 and 1980 particularly showed, the working class demonstrated itself to be the only force capable of coming out against the conservative social structure.” The report argued that the past leaders had isolated themselves from the workers, had failed to build up popular participation, and had created “facade-like” trade unions. “The most important aspect of this trend turned out to be the concentration and cliquishness associated with such a system of rule.” Although it accused both the foreign enemies of socialism and domestic dissidents of aggravating the crisis, it argued:

External factors were not, however, the prime factors determining domestic difficulties and crises. . . . There is no proven bond

exclusively tying the activity of the political opposition to the genesis of crises. Opposition activity normally aggravated crisis situations but by itself was in no position to provoke them. . . . In summary, it can be stated that the fundamental reason for the social crisis in People's Poland was the manner of governing and the relation of the authorities to society. . . . (cited in *New York Times*, January 24, 1983)

This draft report, while far from embodying a complete analysis of the crises, would seem to have grasped much of their genesis, although not the essence. A complete analysis has to go deeper, specifically into the structural and historical causes of the failure of the Party's leadership. (See the concluding chapter for an attempt to summarize a structural and historical account.)



# Poland and the Yugoslav Experiment with Market Socialism

## —III—

Had the Polish army not actively intervened to end the deepening crisis in Polish society the most likely outcome would probably have been the radical disruption of socialist institutions. A form of capitalism would probably have replaced them, possibly with Western parliamentary forms, but more likely, given the economic and social crisis that a new regime would have faced, eventually an authoritarian order more on the lines of 1930s central European governments than English parliamentary democracy. It is likely that the Communist Party would have collapsed as a major force (or have been repressed), and militant anti-Communist nationalism, Christian Democracy (led by the Church), and anti-Communist Social Democracy (led by KOR people), would have emerged as the three dominant non-Communist tendencies and parties. In the short run these three reborn parties would probably have cooperated in a coalition to destroy the remnant of Polish Communism and dismantle most of Poland's socialist institutions (while attempting to keep an advanced social welfare system as well as state ownership of the largest enterprises).

These measures would probably have included the opening of the Polish economy to direct investment by the transnational corporations, the rapid displacement of the peasantry from the land, as well as the removal of Poland from the Warsaw Pact (whether or not Poland formally joined NATO it would have been pro-Western). The differences among the three non-Communist tendencies would probably have resulted in the development of sharp conflicts among

them on such issues as the extent of desocialization of the economy, policy towards agriculture, the dismantling of the welfare state, the hegemony of the church in education and the media, and the extent of military collaboration with the West.

Given the roll back of taken for granted social and economic institutions that benefit the working class and peasantry it would have been expected that the mass of Solidarity and former Party supporters would eventually once again mobilize to bring great pressure to bear against antipopular reforms. The response of the leadership of all three tendencies, the church hierarchy, the pro-Western social democratic intellectuals, and the semi-fascist nationalists, would most likely be to resort to authoritarian forms in order to contain the masses and attempt the completion of their vision of a new Poland.

In summary, then, the most likely outcome of a prolongation of the Polish crisis of 1980-81, assuming intervention by neither the Polish army nor the Warsaw Pact countries, would have been a fundamental rupture of Polish socialism and its replacement by an economic, social, and political order far less favorable to the Polish working class or peasantry than that which existed prior to 1980. In the long run the memory of socialist Poland would probably revive as myth, becoming an increasingly powerful popular force, until a new socialist revolution occurred in the country. It would be expected that as long as NATO existed this organization would continue to perform its original and primary function, i.e., the containment of socialist revolution, and that such a revolutionary process in Poland would not be allowed to culminate (crushed by the West German and/or U.S. Army).

A less likely outcome of the Polish crisis of 1980-81 could have been that the reactionary forces of both the church and Polish nationalism together with Western pressure would have been defeated, and the vision incorporated in the Solidarity convention documents actually implemented. The majority position of Solidarity, designed by the more progressive KOR intellectuals, which had considerable popular support, essentially called for the establishment of Yugoslav type institutions in Poland. Even though it is unlikely that this program would have even been put in place because of the strong forces of the reactionary Church hierarchy, reactionary Polish nationalism and Western pressure, it is important for us to analyze what the probable results of the successful institutionalization of a Yugoslav type socialism in Poland would have been.



The model of societal reorganization advocated at the Solidarity Congress in September and October 1981 was very close to that implemented in Yugoslavia over the 1965-74 period. The radical reduction in the role of central planning agencies, the reliance on markets, the autonomy of enterprises, the election of enterprise directors and the central role of workers' councils, all emphasized by the Solidarity economists, were essential to both.

The remainder of this section is given to the question of the actual working of the Yugoslav model. There is a question of the effect of enterprise autonomy that relies on markets to establish prices, output, wages, employment levels, the terms of trade between urban and rural areas, and the degree of economic equality, as well as questions of the effectiveness of the election of directors and decision making by workers' councils and management boards operating within such economic parameters as the instruments of working class power. The Solidarity intellectuals promised significantly more rapid rates of economic growth, full employment, greater equality, an improved position for the peasants, greater workers' participation, and authentic working class democracy. The scrutinization of the Yugoslav experience casts grave doubts on the viability of such promises.

The first of these is the fact that the United States is a young nation, and that its history is therefore a history of growth and development. The second is the fact that the United States is a large nation, and that its history is therefore a history of expansion and conquest. The third is the fact that the United States is a diverse nation, and that its history is therefore a history of conflict and compromise. The fourth is the fact that the United States is a nation of immigrants, and that its history is therefore a history of assimilation and adaptation. The fifth is the fact that the United States is a nation of pioneers, and that its history is therefore a history of exploration and discovery. The sixth is the fact that the United States is a nation of inventors, and that its history is therefore a history of innovation and progress. The seventh is the fact that the United States is a nation of entrepreneurs, and that its history is therefore a history of risk-taking and achievement. The eighth is the fact that the United States is a nation of leaders, and that its history is therefore a history of vision and inspiration. The ninth is the fact that the United States is a nation of heroes, and that its history is therefore a history of courage and sacrifice. The tenth is the fact that the United States is a nation of dreamers, and that its history is therefore a history of hope and aspiration.



# The Yugoslav Economy

## — 6 —

### Liberalization of the Economy

In 1952, Yugoslavia gradually began to decentralize its highly centralized economy, which had been modeled after that of the Soviets. Enterprise autonomy was increased and the role of workers' councils in the enterprises was greatly expanded. Along with enterprise autonomy, markets came to play an increasing role. Over the next 14 years a number of further steps were taken in this direction. Finally, in 1965 central planning was essentially abolished, except for providing indicators and projections. The laws of markets were then almost completely institutionalized—a major innovation for a socialist country. The results of a decade of market socialism, however, resulted in strong pressures to reverse the process of decentralization and to restore central planning. This was done in a series of steps, mostly in 1974 and 1976.

In the early 1960s the federal planning office had only one-third as many employees as it had in the early 1950s (Wachtel, 1973:62). The role of the state now focused on macroeconomic aggregates and basic goods. The state issued broad directives to the enterprises, but they were few and largely limited to fundamentals. Enterprises now retained a large degree of discretion, especially in the distribution of their output. The states and regional governments now developed and implemented their own plans separate from those of the federal government. These dealt with local and regional economic problems and priorities.

Until 1965 state control of investment and foreign trade, as well as their various macroeconomic instruments, provided a powerful counter to the forces of the market. The central planning agencies also maintained control over the level of wages, the prices of certain commodities, and the distribution of enterprise profits (see Rusinow, 1977:64, 98, 130; International Labour Organisation, 1962:6-8; Moore, 1980:66). However, within these parameters the enterprises, instead of implementing detailed instructions from the federal central planning agencies, were free to determine the quantity, quality, and type of output and inputs, as well as to organize their own production processes. Furthermore, both goods and equipment could be sold on the open market.

In 1965, as the culmination of a debate about disappointing economic performance, liberal intellectuals who celebrated Western-style free markets got the upper hand. Maintaining that existing economic problems stemmed from state control of investment and "irrationality" of pricing, they argued that Yugoslavia should become integrated into the world economy. The liberal intellectuals' celebration of the efficiency of the free market in producing growth through "rational allocation" of resources and stimulating productivity won the day across the board. They argued that if autonomous banks, rather than the state, allocated investment funds, "sound" financial practices, rather than "political considerations" and a "wrongheaded" tendency to rescue inefficient enterprises, would prevail—and thus the efficiency of investment would greatly increase. Further, they argued that the elimination of price controls would decrease inflationary pressures, since such controls produced an "inefficient" allocation of resources.

Between 1965 and the reinstitution of central planning in 1974, the federal state played relatively little role in the economy. What power the state maintained was now exercised through the manipulation of basic economic parameters rather than through directives (see Schrenk et al., 1979:72-77). In the 1950s the Yugoslav state provided roughly two-thirds of the investment funds in the economy; in the early 1960s, about 60 percent. After the decentralization reforms, the bulk of investment funds came from banks, whose activities were not politically or centrally coordinated. These banks provided between 50 and 55 percent of all investment financing through most of 1964-71. In that period direct state investment, on all levels, averaged about 15 percent of all investment. (Before 1963, it should



be noted, bank financing of investment was insignificant.) It should also be noted that between 1954 and 1963 the enterprises' own funds accounted for about 35 percent of their investment; and between 1965 and 1971, about 30 percent (Moore, 1980:113). One result of this radical shift from state to autonomous bank funding of investment was a decrease in the aggregate level of investment in the economy as a whole. The ratio of gross domestic investment to gross national product was 33.7 percent in 1961-65, 29.7 percent in 1966-70, and 28.4 percent in 1971-73 (see Schrenk et al., 1979:137).

The corollary of the transfer of the allocation of the investment function from the central planning agencies to autonomous banks, the opening up of the Yugoslav economy to the world market, the withering of price controls, and the reduction of the central plan to providing predictions was the increased autonomy of the enterprises, theoretically under the control of their workers' councils. The enterprises gained control over the allocation of their profits, including the proportions to be allocated to wages and to investment, as well as the power to lay off workers for redundancy. The role of the state and trade unions in guiding the uses of the wage fund was discontinued (see Moore, 1980:5-10; Rusinow, 1977:110; Schrenk et al., 1979:26-28).

The decision-making process of the enterprises now became almost completely a product of the logic of the commodity, labor, and capital markets. And within the enterprises there emerged a strong tendency to what was eventually labeled a "technocratic-managerial" elite that sought to prompt control of the economy through "group ownership," and thus the undermining of the power of the working class both on the enterprise and on the national level. "Self-management" became increasingly equated with the autonomy of enterprise management.

Within a few years a relative handful of banks came to dominate the investment process, gaining high income levels for themselves and their employees, especially their management. During 1965-68 there was an aggressive merger movement among banks, and at the end of the period only ten banks held virtually all outstanding investment credits in the Yugoslav economy (Moore, 1980:112). Under the liberalized banking regime, any set of enterprises could set up a bank by supplying permanent deposits. Such banks were responsible to the enterprises that set them up. Representative councils selected by the enterprises theoretically controlled

the banks. However, such assemblies exerted little control over policy—just as workers' councils exerted little control over enterprise policy. Bank administrators came to exercise real economic ownership, and tremendous autonomous power and privilege, not the least of the means by which administrators and technical specialists were able to dominate the meetings of their "controlling" councils (see Schrenk et al., 1979:30; Rusinow, 1977:208).

### Integration into the World Market

As part of the liberal reforms of 1961 and 1965, the Yugoslav economy was open to the world market. This meant that price levels were adjusted to correspond to world market prices, that Yugoslav workers were free to work overseas, that foreign capital was allowed to purchase equity in Yugoslav enterprises (up to 49 percent), that enterprises were allowed to negotiate foreign trade deals directly, that the Yugoslav currency became convertible at a single exchange rate, and that the country joined international capitalist economic agencies, such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (see, for example, Rusinow, 1977:207; Horvat, 1976:20).

Goods subject to import restrictions were reduced significantly. From 39 percent of all imports in 1967, duty-free commodities grew to 60 percent by 1974 (see Schrenk et al., 1979:228). During 1965–70 imports grew 2.9 percent more rapidly than gross material product, compared with 1.1 percent in 1956–65. The ratio of imports from, to exports to, the capitalist world rose from 1.6 in 1967 to 2.1 in 1970—that is, in 1970–74 Yugoslavia imported twice as much from the capitalist world as it exported to it (see Schrenk et al., 1979:228, 344).

As a result of liberalization, the enterprises specializing in foreign trade tended to accumulate massive profits because of the oligopolistic structure of domestic trading relations. These enterprises tended to channel their profits into mergers with less profitable domestic enterprises, thus transforming themselves into conglomerates. They were also able to use their power to force domestic manufacturing enterprises into dependency on them through use of credit and preferential delivery arrangements. Thus, as in the case of the banks, a rather rapid centralization of economic power and a concurrent appropriation of surplus value occurred.



The liberalization of 1965 allowed foreign transnational firms to acquire up to 49 percent of total equity in Yugoslav firms—such foreign investment, however, had to be approved by the appropriate state ministry. In the first five years of this program (1968–72), 72 contracts with foreign enterprises were signed. Over this period foreign funds accounted for 4 percent of all new medium- and long-term capital (Horvat, 1976:205). As of January 31, 1974, there were 31 foreign investments in metal products (46 percent of the value of foreign investments), 17 in chemicals (16 percent of foreign investments), and 11 in electrical equipment (6 percent of foreign investments). The total value of foreign investment in Yugoslavia on this date was \$137 million, an average of 17 percent of the equity in those firms in which investment had been made (see Schrenk et al., 1979:352).

Yugoslavia's integration into the world capitalist economy resulted in the buildup of considerable debt to foreign state and private banks. At the end of 1981 Yugoslavia owed \$11 billion, more than any other socialist country except Poland (*New York Times*, Sept. 12, 1982). The ratio of Yugoslav debt service to gross domestic product grew from 2.7 percent in 1966 to 4.5 percent in 1974, while the ratio of debt service to disbursed debt grew from 20.6 percent to 24.6 percent (Schrenk et al., 1979:222). However, over the 1970s Yugoslavia reduced its debt burden. For example, its external debt represented 8.8 percent of its GNP in 1970 and 6.6 percent in 1980. Its debt service payments, meanwhile, were reduced from 8.3 percent of its exports of goods and services in 1970 to 3.4 percent in 1980 (World Bank, 1982:tables 13, 15). During the 1970s, then, Poland and Yugoslavia took different courses in relation to the international banks.

## Inflation

Until the 1965 decentralization reforms, the Yugoslav state regulated prices fairly closely. The following mechanisms were employed: ceiling prices were set for a large number of raw materials and intermediate products; wholesalers' trade margins were controlled by republics and retailers' trade margins by local municipalities; the state temporarily froze prices in exceptional circumstances; price increases had to be registered 30 days in advance with the Fed-

eral Price Bureau; and a system of minimum and guaranteed prices was established for staple foods. These price controls were considerably weakened, but not altogether eliminated, by the 1965 reforms. Since the 1974 recentralization these mechanisms, somewhat strengthened, have continued to coexist with the social compacts'/self-management agreements' specification of price levels as controls on price increases—although they have not been very effective (see Schrenk et al., 1979:120).

In 1965 Yugoslav price levels were realigned to world market prices. After a sudden average price jump of 30 percent, many price controls were again instituted, even though, in theory, prices were supposed to be allowed to adjust continually in order to stay aligned with world prices (Schrenk et al., 1979:120). Controls were, however, gradually relaxed. In 1965, at the announcement of the new price levels, about 70 percent of the value of industrial production was subject to price controls; in 1968, 46 percent; and in 1970, 43 percent (Horvat, 1976:176).

In 1958–64 the Yugoslav rate of inflation averaged 8.0 percent, in strong contrast with the minuscule rate of inflation of the comparable socialist countries (see Table 6.1). In fact, the Yugoslav rate was higher than that of comparable capitalist countries at the same time. The effect of the liberalization reforms was a doubling in the rate of inflation, which averaged 16.9 percent a year between 1964 and 1975. Recentralization slowed the rate of inflation to 13.9 percent in 1975–78—a greater accomplishment than it might at first appear to be, since the rate of inflation in the world market was accelerating at the time. In 1964–75 the Yugoslav rate of inflation significantly exceeded that of comparable capitalist countries. However, in 1975–78 its rate became less than most; but in 1979–82 the stagflation of the world economy appears to have overwhelmed Yugoslavia. It had an average rate of inflation of 34.2 percent in that period—again higher than that of comparable capitalist countries.

The Yugoslav rate of inflation over the entire period is in strong contrast with that of the other socialist countries. While both Hungary and Poland experienced a moderate increase in inflation in 1958–78, it was tiny compared with that of Yugoslavia. Bulgaria and Romania experienced no significant inflation over this period (see Table 6.1).



Table 6.1. Inflation in Selected Socialist and Capitalist Nations, 1958-82

	(percent)			
	1958-64	1964-75	1975-78	1979-82
Yugoslavia	8.0	16.9	13.9	34.2
Poland	1.2	1.8	5.9	—
Bulgaria	1.4	.5	1.0	—
Hungary	.0	2.0	4.5	—
Romania	1.5*	.5	.7	1.7
Greece	1.4	7.8	12.5	23.4
Italy	3.6	7.0	15.8	18.5
Portugal	2.3	10.2	21.4	19.8
Spain	5.8	9.0	20.6	14.8

\*1962-64.

Source: United Nations, 1982 and various; International Monetary Fund, 1983.

## Unemployment

Until the 1965 decentralization reforms, workers had very strong rights in their jobs. They were generally dismissed only for serious breaches of work discipline.\* Workers whose working ability had been reduced could be dismissed only with special approval of the relevant state agency. In practice few workers were dismissed because of the informal norms, workers' rights in their jobs, and state guarantees of wages. The state also actively pursued a full-employment policy. Further, workers could not be assigned, without their

\*The Labor Relations Act of 1957 stipulated the following as serious and punishable violations of labor discipline: abuse of official position or excessive authority; an act or omission that hampers or prevents the proper functioning of the undertaking; failure to safeguard the property of the undertaking; unjustified or inadmissible refusal to carry out orders, connected with the work, given by the competent authorities or by a superior; deriving material gain from the operations of the undertaking and to its disadvantage; unjustified absence from work for more than three consecutive days; or inciting others in the undertaking to disorder or violence (International Labour Organisation, 1962:195).

consent, a job that did not correspond to their vocational qualifications. If workers could not meet the requirements of a job and, after being given the opportunity to acquire the appropriate skills through training, refused such training, they could be transferred or dismissed. They could be temporarily transferred because of special conditions, but without loss of pay (see International Labour Organisation, 1962:183-86; Adizes, 1971:167). These guarantees, however, were greatly weakened by the 1965 reforms, which gave enterprises the authority to dismiss and allocate workers on almost any grounds—which the enterprises themselves were to decide.

The rate of unemployment in Yugoslavia averaged 5.8 percent in 1959-64. After the liberalization reforms it jumped to 7.7 percent. The recentralization of the economy in 1974 and 1976, however, did not decrease it—apparently in good part because of the return of Yugoslav workers from Western Europe. In 1976-78 unemployment averaged 11.8 percent (United Nations, 1982 and various). However, in 1982 the unemployment rate was still 12 percent (*New York Times*, June 24, 1982), indicating that Yugoslavia had succeeded to a degree in isolating itself from the rapidly deteriorating world capitalist economy. (In most market economies the rate of unemployment at least doubled between the early 1970s and the early 1980s, accelerating after 1979.)

The rate of unemployment in Italy averaged 3.4 percent in 1965-75, 6.0 percent in 1976-78, and 8.9 percent in 1981; that of Spain averaged 1.8 percent in 1965-75, 6.1 percent in 1976-78, and 14.6 percent in 1981 (United Nations, 1982 and various; OECD, 1983). It should be noted that the serious problem of unemployment, aggravated by the 1965 reforms and not cleared up by recentralization, is in strong contrast with the serious labor shortage in the rest of Eastern Europe. In Romania, Poland, Hungary, and Bulgaria unemployment is essentially only frictional; all who want work can choose among many lucrative opportunities provided by economic planning.

Regional disparities in unemployment within Yugoslavia are particularly pronounced. In 1971-75 the unemployment rate averaged 20.5 percent in Kosovo and 18.8 percent in Macedonia, while it averaged only 1.8 percent in Slovenia and 4.7 percent in Croatia (Schrenk et al., 1979:248).

Before the 1965 liberal reforms, not only was foreign employment effectively prohibited by law, but domestic employment poli-



cies attempted to guarantee workers sufficient jobs at home. The legalization of migrant labor in 1965, together with the curtailment of the state's role in securing full employment and the granting of authority to enterprises to dismiss workers on grounds of redundancy or cost reduction, led to a massive outpouring of workers who could no longer find employment at home—mostly young and from rural backgrounds—to Germany, Switzerland, and other wealthy countries of Northwestern Europe. In 1966 there were 275,000 Yugoslav workers abroad; in 1969, 572,000; in 1972, 1,020,000 (Schrenk et al., 1979:359). In 1969–73 over 50 percent of the expansion in the labor force was accounted for by migrant workers. In 1973 workers employed overseas represented 26 percent of the number of those employed in the socialized sector in Yugoslavia—that is, almost one out of four employed Yugoslavs worked outside the country (see Schrenk et al., 1979:266).\*

Before the 1965 reforms, workers were guaranteed a minimum wage in the event an enterprise's net income was insufficient to pay its workers at such a level. Payments were made from an insurance fund to which all enterprises contributed. In 1957 the minimum personal income was set at 80 percent of the average annual wage. On the other hand, the local government taxed personal income<sup>a</sup> at a steep progressive rate in order to discourage high rates of payout of enterprise income, a policy that facilitated capital accumulation and growth, as well as less expensive products. The excess wages tax went as high as 70 percent of wages above 120 percent of the norm. In 1961 the excess wage tax was replaced by a flat payroll tax, thus decreasing downward pressure on wages (Wachtel, 1973:112–31). If an enterprise was unable to make minimum wage payments over a protracted period, it was placed in receivership (compulsory management) by the commune in which it was located. After the 1965 re-

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\*In the mid-1970s there was a reversal of the labor outflow. On the one hand the economies of Europe were gradually becoming stagnant; not only were they no longer recruiting new labor migrants, but they were beginning to push out those already in place. On the other hand, with the recentralization reforms of 1974–76, emphasis was again given to the creation of jobs in Yugoslavia as well as to restoring workers' rights in their jobs (workers could no longer be dismissed for mere redundancy). In 1975 there were only 7,700 new emigrants while 19,600 returned (see Schrenk et al., 1979:268). At the end of 1981 there were about 560,000 Yugoslavs working abroad. Over the last years of the 1970s about 50,000 a year were returning to Yugoslavia (*New York Times*, Feb. 23, 1982).

forms, however, these guarantees and controls were considerably loosened, with the result that workers sometimes experienced payless paydays (Rusinow, 1977:104).

Until 1965, and again after the recentralization measures of 1974–76, the trade unions have played a strong role in determining both wage differentials and the average wage levels within enterprises. They generally acted to secure equity among enterprises. The 1965 decentralization reforms, however, saw the abolition of this role of the unions. Each enterprise's workers' council now made autonomous decisions about wage levels and differentials, without pressure from the unions to meet common standards of equity.

### Economic Growth

In 1954–64 Yugoslavia's gross material product grew at an average of 8.6 percent per year and its rate of increase in gross industrial output was 12.3 percent. In the decade after the decentralization reforms of 1964, the overall rate of growth decreased to 6.4 percent and the rate of increase in gross industrial output was reduced to 7.7 percent. The rate of growth of industrial employment experienced an even more significant downturn—from 6.8 percent to 3.3 percent, while the annual rate of increase in productivity decreased from 5.5 percent to 4.3 percent (see Table 6.2). In all major respects Yugoslavia's economy deteriorated.

Table 6.3 compares Yugoslavia's overall rate of growth, rate of growth of industry, and rate of growth in personal consumption per capita with comparable capitalist and socialist countries for 1960–65, 1965–74, and 1974–79—the periods just before, during, and just after the free market stage of Yugoslav history. In 1960–65 Yugoslavia had a higher rate of growth in its net material product (NMP), industry, and personal consumption than most of the comparable socialist countries (only Romania had a more rapid rate of growth in NMP or industry). Yugoslavia also grew more rapidly than, or as rapidly as, the four comparable capitalist countries, except Spain, on all three measures.

During the period of market determination of its economy, however, Yugoslavia's position was reversed: the rate of overall economic



**Table 6.2. Growth Rates of Yugoslav Macroeconomic Indicators, 1954-75**

(percent)

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Average annual rate of growth</i>	
	<i>1954-64</i>	<i>1965-75</i>
Gross material product	8.6	6.4
Gross industrial output	12.3	7.7
Industrial employment	6.8	3.3
Productivity of industrial labor	5.5	4.3
Employment	6.2	3.0
Real personal incomes	5.3	4.0
Commodity exports	11.9	6.2
Commodity imports	11.4	10.1
Fixed assets	9.2	8.0

*Source:* Schrenk et al., 1979:32.

growth became lower than that of any of the comparable socialist or capitalist countries. Its rate of industrialization was now lower than that of all but Italy, while its rate of growth in personal consumption per capita was lower than that of all but Hungary. This is strong evidence that the deterioration of the Yugoslav economy after 1965 was due to the introduction of the logic of markets.

With the recentralization of the economy in 1974, Yugoslavia's relative position improved considerably. Its rates of overall growth, industrialization, and personal consumption now became superior to those of all the comparable capitalist countries. Its rate of growth in net material product was now at more or less the average for comparable centrally planned economies; however, its rate of industrial growth remained significantly below the norm for such economies, while the rate of growth in personal consumption was apparently somewhat higher than the norm (although lower than that of Poland). It should be noted that in 1965-79 Poland had a significantly higher rate of growth of both industry and personal consumption than did Yugoslavia, a reversal of the pre-1965 situation. All this is strong evidence that the hope of those who argue that giving markets free rein increases growth and consumption levels is fundamentally

Table 6.3. Comparative Rates of Growth: Yugoslavia, Other Socialist Countries, Selected Capitalist Countries, 1960-79  
(percent)

	GNP/NMP				Personal consumption				Industrial growth			
	1960-65	1965-74	1974-79	1960-65	1965-74	1974-79	1960-65	1965-74	1960-65	1965-74	1974-79	1974-79
Yugoslavia	7.5	6.0	6.0	7.3	5.8	5.7	10.7	6.7	5.8			
Italy	5.0	6.2	2.6	5.8	6.3	2.2	6.5	6.6	3.2			
Portugal	6.4	6.3	—	3.5	6.3	—	9.1	8.1	—			
Greece	7.7	7.0	5.3	6.3	6.5	5.0	9.1	11.4	6.3			
Spain	8.4	6.4	2.4	8.4	6.2	2.7	11.6	9.4	2.6			
Bulgaria	6.6	8.0	7.0	—	—	—	9.2	11.0	10.3			
Hungary	4.5	6.5	5.1	3.5	5.4	3.2	7.0	7.2	5.9			
Poland	6.0	7.4	4.2	4.4	6.1	6.0	8.6	8.9	6.0			
Romania	8.9	9.2	8.8	—	—	—	13.7	13.3	9.6			

Source: United Nations, 1980, III, table 4.



wrong. Central planning clearly is more efficient in both industrializing a country and raising living standards.

The industrialization of Yugoslavia has been associated with the rapid growth of its working class. In 1931 industrial workers represented 12 percent of the economically active population; in 1960, 18 percent; and in 1980, 35 percent (World Bank, 1982:147; Jambrešić, 1975:43). It should be noted that the industrial working class has been growing significantly more rapidly in Yugoslavia than in Poland, where the industrial working class grew from 29 percent to 39 percent of the economically active population between 1960 and 1980.

Yugoslavia and Poland are the only two socialist countries without collectivized agriculture, and thus it is most instructive to compare the results of their agricultural policies. Poland has heavily and increasingly subsidized its private peasants, especially in guaranteeing them a much higher price for their basic produce than the workers pay for it in the stores. These subsidized prices to the farmers are much higher than they could secure in a free market. In contrast, Yugoslavia has provided minimal economic supports to the peasantry, instead allowing the laws of markets to operate to a much greater extent than in Poland in establishing food prices. As a result, the prices farmers obtain for their produce in Yugoslavia have generally been significantly less than those that have prevailed in Poland—and the price of food in the shops has been higher in Yugoslavia than Poland.

The consequence of the heavy Polish subsidization of private agriculture, and the relative absence of economic supports to the peasants in Yugoslavia, is that Polish agriculture has become much less efficient than the Yugoslav. While in Poland small, inefficient producers can survive on the land because of price supports, in Yugoslavia they are much more likely to go bankrupt and move to the urban areas, giving way to more efficient and somewhat larger producers. This is shown by the fact that in 1960, 63 percent of the Yugoslav labor force was employed in agriculture but only 29 percent in 1980, a reduction to 46 percent of its size in 1960. In Poland, on the other hand, 48 percent of the labor force was in agriculture in 1960 and 31 percent in 1980, a reduction to 65 percent of its size in 1960.

While the Yugoslav system of relying on markets to reduce the size and increase the efficiency of agriculture works far better than the Polish system of subsidizing inefficient producers, neither works

as well as collectivization and state farms with central planning. For example, in the USSR in 1960, 42 percent of the population was engaged in agriculture, but in 1980 only 14 percent, a reduction to 33 percent of its earlier size. In Hungary, which collectivized around 1960, the percentage in agriculture declined from 38 percent to 15 percent between 1960 and 1980, a reduction to 39 percent of its former size. Romania reduced its agricultural labor force from 65 percent in 1960 to 29 percent in 1980, a reduction to 45 percent of its former size (see World Bank, 1982:147).

### Inequality

There has been a relatively high level of income inequality in Yugoslavia, in comparison with other socialist countries. Around 1970 only 40 percent of working-class families had an annual income significantly above the officially defined poverty line, in contrast with 94 percent of all white-collar families (Vuskovic, 1976:41). In Yugoslavia in 1978, the top 10 percent of households earned 22.9 percent of all income; the highest 20 percent, 38.7 percent; and the lowest 20 percent, 6.6 percent. These income distributions are comparable with those of the more progressive "social-democratic" countries of Northern Europe and significantly more unequal than the income distributions of other socialist countries. For example, in Sweden in 1979, the top 10 percent of all households earned 21.2 percent of all income; in the Netherlands in 1977, 22.1 percent; in Norway in 1970, 22.2 percent; and in Denmark in 1976, 22.4 percent. The top 20 percent earned 37.2 percent, 37.0 percent, 37.3 percent, and 37.5 percent, respectively. And the bottom 20 percent earned 7.2 percent, 8.1 percent, 6.3 percent, and 7.4 percent. By contrast, in the United States in 1972, the top 10 percent earned 26.6 percent of total income; the top 20 percent, 42.8 percent; and the bottom 10 percent, 4.5 percent (see World Bank, 1982:159).

While the income differentials among the vast majority of the population are equivalent to those among Northern European countries, it should be noted that no one in Yugoslavia has the extremely high incomes characteristic of the upper levels of the capitalist class in any of the capitalist societies. Most of the other socialist countries are, however, significantly more egalitarian than Yugoslavia.



For example, in the German Democratic Republic in 1970, the top 10 percent of households had only 16.9 percent of the income; the top 20 percent, 30.7 percent; and the bottom 20 percent, 10.4 percent. Comparing Yugoslavia's 1968 distribution of the income of workers (not household income)—the top 10 percent getting 21.1 percent; the top 20 percent getting 35.1 percent; and the bottom 20 percent getting 10.5 percent—with similar data for the other Eastern European socialist countries shows that the Yugoslav income distribution is significantly more unequal than that of most of the others. In Czechoslovakia the top 10 percent of workers in 1964 received 17.4 percent; the top 20 percent, 31.1 percent; and the bottom 20 percent, 11.9 percent. In Hungary in 1964, the top 10 percent received 18.3 percent; the top 20 percent, 31.0 percent; and the bottom 20 percent, 11.3 percent. In Poland, however, in 1964 the top 10 percent received 21.2 percent; the top 20 percent, 36.1 percent; and the bottom 20 percent, 9.8 percent (Jain, 1975). With Yugoslavia, Poland appears to have the highest level of inequality in Eastern Europe. In conclusion, leaving aside the very high income ranges, the role of markets in Yugoslavia appears to have resulted in an income distribution more like that of Northern European capitalist, than most socialist, countries.

During 1965–74, the time of greatest decentralization, there was a general tendency for income differentials to increase. For example, in Slovenia in 1967 the average income was 1.45 times that of unskilled workers, and middle-qualification white-collar workers were making 1.60 times that figure; by 1971 these ratios had risen to 1.53 and 1.74, respectively (see Jambreč, 1975:58).

The introduction of markets had radically magnified the urban-rural differentials. While in 1962 the ratio of urban to rural real incomes was 1.24 times what it had been in 1957, in 1966 it was 1.85 times, and in 1971, 3.74 times, what it had been in 1957 (see Table 6.4). Allowing markets free rein clearly impoverished the peasantry, to the benefit of the towns.

Within the industrial sector there was a tendency for wage differentials to increase among industries. For example, in 1956 the ratio of the average monthly wages per employee in the highest-paying industry to that of the lowest-paying industry was 1.52, and in 1969 it was 1.92; the standard deviation divided by the mean average wage rose from 11.8 to 21.6 over the same period. The highest-pay-

**Table 6.4. Real Incomes in the Urban and Rural Sectors: Yugoslavia, 1957-73**

	<i>Urban real incomes</i>	<i>Rural real incomes</i>	<i>Relative incomes urban: rural</i>
1957	100.0	100.0	100.0
1958	107.1	92.3	116.1
1959	131.8	112.6	117.1
1960	138.0	103.5	133.3
1961	127.8	101.0	126.5
1962	122.1	98.6	123.8
1963	125.3	113.2	110.7
1964	113.1	123.1	91.9
1965	137.2	82.4	166.5
1966	170.9	92.4	184.9
1967	225.3	86.6	260.0
1968	265.8	86.5	307.3
1969	280.7	96.6	290.6
1970	304.2	93.2	326.6
1971	317.6	84.9	374.4
1972	282.5	98.7	286.3
1973	257.5	98.0	262.6

*Source:* Estrin, 1982:80.

ing industries have consistently been the most capital-intensive—electrical, energy, shipbuilding, petroleum—while the lowest-paying have been the most labor-intensive—textiles, food products, wood products, leather, and tobacco. The effect of the liberalization of 1965 was to accelerate the tendency to inequality among enterprises. For example, while the ratio of the standard deviation to the mean of interindustry wage differentials had increased from 11.8 to 16.0 between 1956 and 1963, it jumped to 21.6 by 1966 (Wachtel, 1973:139).

Not surprisingly, there are considerable differences by occupation in attitude toward egalitarian income policies in Yugoslavia. For example, one study found that 54.5 percent of unskilled and semi-skilled blue-collar workers supported greater equalization of in-



come, compared with only 0.9 percent of managers and 3.3 percent of experts. Similarly, 80.0 percent of the unskilled or semiskilled workers felt that the desirable differential between the highest- and lowest-paid people should be 1:2 or 1:3, compared with only 22.1 percent of managers and 34.8 percent of experts. On the other hand, only 4.7 percent of unskilled and semiskilled workers felt that the desirable income spread ought to be greater than 1:4, compared with 37.5 percent of managers and 25.0 percent of experts (see Obradovic and Dunn, 1978:75). These contrasts reflect not only a rather fundamental difference in interests characteristic of classes but also, apparently, rather major differences in attitude characteristic of social class differences.

There is rather less mobility from the peasantry and working class to the intelligentsia in Yugoslavia than in other socialist countries. A study done in the early 1960s found that the children of workers had only one-ninth the chance, and the children of peasants one-twentieth the chance, of entering the intelligentsia (as a professional or administrator) that the children of professionals or managers had (see Wachtel, 1973:75). In another study in Slovenia around 1970, the children of white-collar, professional, and administrative employees had twice the probability of children of workers of finishing secondary education, and five times the chance of getting a higher-level degree—and thus a position in the intelligentsia (Vuskovic, 1976:38).

The parents of children in vocational schools are heavily working-class and peasant, while those of students in academic secondary schools are heavily intelligentsia in background. One study of the Split region of Yugoslavia found that around 1966, peasant children represented only 15 percent of the enrollment in academic secondary schools, but made up 65–70 percent of the enrollment in many types of vocational schools. The fact that, according to this same study, 93 percent of the pupils graduating from the academic secondary schools, compared with 38 percent of those graduating from the vocational schools, went on to universities, greatly magnifies the class differences in access to higher education (Vuskovic, 1976:39), and thus the probability of securing professional or administrative jobs.

In contrast with most other socialist countries, the Yugoslav state gives little financial aid to students. For example, in 1969 only about 10 percent of students were receiving state grants, usually in

amounts significantly below the maintenance level (Vuskovic, 1976:39).

There appears to be a rather high level of cynicism among youth about the chances of achieving a position of responsibility. For example, the study of students in the Split region found that while 27 percent of them believed that "social success depends on qualifications, work or dedication," 60 percent believed that it is rather "a question of connections, bribery, bootlicking or pulling strings" (cited in Vuskovic, 1976:41).

There are very large economic disparities among the various Yugoslav regions. The northwest of the country is not only far wealthier than the south but, from the mid-1950s to the mid-1970s—the period of relative decentralization—the gap between the two regions widened. This is in sharp contrast with the experience of most of the other socialist countries, such as the USSR, in which the traditional gaps between the poor and wealthy regions have been radically reduced through central planning. For example, in 1954 the gross material product per capita in the poorest region, Kosovo (where the dominant nationality is Albanian), was 48 percent of the federal average, while that in the richest region, Slovenia, was 188 percent of the average. By 1975 Kosovo had slipped to 33 percent of the federal average, while Slovenia had risen to 201 percent. In general, over this 21-year period the average for the four less developed regions slipped from 71 percent to 62 percent of the federal average, while that for the more developed regions rose from 110 percent to 121 percent (see Table 6.5). In 1966–75, the period more or less coincident with the greater decentralization and reliance on market forces, the average annual rate of growth per capita in the poorer regions was 3.5 percent, while that in the richer regions was 4.9 percent; in Kosovo alone it was 3.0 percent, and in Slovenia 6.0 percent. The great disparity among regions was also manifested in the unemployment rate. In 1971–75 unemployment averaged 1.8 percent in Slovenia and 20.5 percent in Kosovo. In the four less-developed regions it averaged 14.5 percent; in the more-developed, 6.2 percent.

With recentralization in 1974–76 priority was given to reducing the widening gap among regions. The 1976–80 plan, for example, stipulated that the poorer regions would have a rate of growth of 8.2 percent per year (9.5 percent for Kosovo), while the richer regions would grow at 6.7 percent (6.1 percent for Slovenia) (see Table 6.5). This plan emphasized the transfer of funds as well as managerial and



Table 6.5. Economic Disparities Among Regions of Yugoslavia, 1954-75

Region	Gross material Product per capita (Yugoslavia = 100)				Gross National Product per capita (dollars)	House- hold income per capita (Yugo- slavia = 100)	Average annual rate of growth in gross material product per capita		Unemployment 1971-75	Plan targets	
	1954	1964	1970	1975			1966-75	1976-80 Average annual rate of GMP growth (percent)		1980 Gross material product per capita (Yugoslavia = 100)	
Less-developed regions											
Bosnia-Herzegovina	71	65	61	62	924	72	3.5	14.5%		8.2	64
Kosovo	82	69	67	69	1,016	76	3.6	8.3		8.2	72
Macedonia	48	37	34	33	492	49	3.0	20.5		9.5	34
Montenegro	69	73	64	69	1,026	78	4.5	18.8		8.0	71
	53	72	78	70	1,035	82	3.9	10.3		8.3	73
More developed regions											
Croatia	110	118	121	121	1,793	116	4.9	6.2		6.7	121
Serbia	119	119	125	124	1,840	125	4.8	4.7		6.5	124
Slovenia	84	95	97	92	1,365	100	4.6	10.1		7.0	94
Vojvodina	188	187	193	201	2,979	150	6.0	1.8		6.1	195
	88	116	110	121	1,790	105	4.6	8.2		7.1	126
Yugoslavia	100	100	100	100	1,480	100	4.5	8.3		6.9	100

Source: Schrenk et al., 1979:105, 387, 390, 309.

technical resources from the richer to the poorer regions (see Schrenk et al., 1979:7).

The disparity among regions increased during 1965–74 in good part because the state-directed redistribution of national income was sharply cut back. While the average annual growth rate of fixed capital in 1957–61 was 11.4 percent in the less-developed regions and 8.2 percent in the more-developed regions, by 1966–71 it was 8.2 percent in the less-developed and 8.3 percent in the more-developed (Moore, 1980:136).

The disparities among regions are also manifested in medical care, housing standards, literacy rates, and education levels. For example, in 1975 Kosovo had a doctor:population ratio of only 35 percent of the Yugoslav average, compared with 133 percent for Slovenia; a hospital:population ratio of 48 percent of the federal average, compared with Slovenia's 127 percent; a housing space per person ratio of 63 percent of the federal average, compared with Slovenia's 127 percent; an illiteracy rate double the federal average, compared with the virtual absence of illiteracy in Slovenia; and a ratio of persons with at least ten years of education:population of 46 percent of the federal average, contrasted with Slovenia's 144 percent (see Table 6.6). These figures all contrast radically with the comparable statistics for the European and Central Asian republics of the USSR, where there are very few differences in any of these indicators (see A. Szymański, 1984:ch. 2). There is, of course, nothing remotely like the immense regional disparities of Yugoslavia in Poland or any of the other Eastern European countries.

### Workers' Councils

In addition to being unique among the socialist countries in the role it has given (especially in 1965–74) to the operation of free markets, Yugoslavia is unique among socialist countries in the extent to which formal authority for decision making in enterprises, including the selection of leading enterprise directors, has been in the hands of workers' councils elected by all employees, both white- and blue-collar. The formal authority of the Yugoslav workers' councils grew in 1952–65, being granted almost complete autonomy in the liberal reforms of 1965. After proving far more amenable to *de facto* control by top administrators than most workers and League of Communist



Table 6.6. Social Disparities Among Regions of Yugoslavia, 1975 (Yugoslavia as a whole = 100)

Region	Life expectancy at birth <sup>a</sup>		Persons per doctor	Persons per hospital bed	Average area of dwelling per person	Proportion of dwellings with electricity	Proportion of dwellings with water and sewers	Illiteracy rate <sup>b</sup>		Proportion of population over ten years having secondary or higher education	Persons per passenger car <sup>b</sup>	
	Males Females							Total	Males			Females
Less developed regions												
Bosnia-Herzegovina	98	97	66	75	77	87	68	65	71	63	70	61
Kosovo	99	95	35	48	63	86	37	48	36	52	46	29
Macedonia	100	96	91	91	82	104	111	83	67	88	76	79
Montenegro	104	104	76	130	81	90	99	90	105	87	94	65
More developed regions												
Croatia	100	103	114	118	118	103	122	167	159	172	121	114
Serbia	103	102	120	108	100	102	97	85	103	81	103	104
Slovenia	100	104	133	127	127	109	133	1,250	667	1,667	144	213
Vojvodina	101	103	109	101	125	104	119	167	147	172	111	116

<sup>a</sup>Based on the 1971 census.

<sup>b</sup>Inverse ratio.

Source: Schrenk et al., 1979:288-89.

leaders anticipated, significant constraints were put on their decision-making processes in 1974–76, as part of the recentralization of the economy.\*

The growth of, and the more recent limitations on, the powers of workers' councils have proved to be an extremely valuable experiment—as has, of course, the Yugoslav experience with free markets as the way enterprises relate to one another. Much can be learned from the largely unanticipated consequences of the Yugoslav experience. We should, thus, be able to make an intelligent prediction of what would have happened in Poland if, as the Solidarity program demanded, workers' councils with elected directors had been institutionalized—just as we can intelligently predict what would have happened if the Polish central plan had been essentially abolished in favor of free markets, as the right wing of Solidarity wanted.

Each basic work organization in Yugoslavia elects a council, which has jurisdiction over matters totally self-contained within a unit. These elections take place every other year, at the beginning of the unit's accounting period. Each workers' council, which averages 20–25 members, in turn elects an executive board—the management board—and a president. The election to the workers' council takes place at a general assembly of all members of the work unit, including the technical and administrative staff. Nominations occur at a general meeting of the work unit. Four endorsers are sufficient to nominate, although the unions have traditionally provided most nominees (Wachtel, 1973:65–66). After discussion, voting is by secret ballot. About 98 percent of those elected to the councils, at least until

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\*The formal authority of the workers' council is defined as follows: "The workers' council . . . approves the basic plans and annual balance sheet of the enterprise; adopts conclusions regarding the management of the enterprise and the fulfilment of the economic plan; elects, recalls and relieves of duty the board of management or its individual members; enacts enterprise rules subject to approval by the board of management of the higher economic association or appropriate State agency; reviews reports on the work and individual measures of the board of management and adopts conclusions regarding the approval of its work. . . . The board of management . . . prepares drafts of the enterprise's basic plans, lays down its monthly operational plans . . . decides on the appointment of staff to executive posts, decides on workers' and office staff's complaints against decisions on dismissal and internal assignment to jobs, . . . [and] is responsible for the fulfilment of the plan and for the efficient operation of the enterprise (Arts. 23, 27, cited in Rusinow, 1977:58).



the 1970s, were on the initial trade-union lists. In only 2–5 percent of elections were candidates not on the trade-union list nominated, indicating that the trade union's nomination process has apparently been fairly responsive to the sentiments of most workers. Lists submitted by the trade unions usually contain more names than positions to be filled. There are procedures for special elections to the councils in the event of their dissolution or a recall petition by workers (International Labour Organisation, 1962:77, 88; Wachtel, 1973:65). Although directors have not been eligible to be delegates to the workers' councils they *are* ex officio nonvoting members (Obrađovic and Dunn, 1978:268). Workers' councils generally meet about once a month.

There is considerable rotation in the membership of the workers' councils. To ensure rotation, there are limits on the consecutive terms that members of a council can serve. This rotation of the voting delegations—by discouraging the accumulation of experience, breaking the continuity of workers' leadership, and in general undermining the development of strong leaders—gives a considerable advantage to the ex officio nonvoting technical experts and top managers, who are thus in a position to manipulate the decision-making processes.

Although before 1975 members of the administrative staff could not be elected to workers' councils, they could be elected by the workers' council to the management board. But before and after the 1974 reforms, the directors of each work unit have been ex officio nonvoting members of the managing board. The members of the management board are limited to two one-year terms, and cannot be elected for a third consecutive term. Management boards, which average five to seven members, tend to meet at least once a week. Neither members of the workers' council nor of the management board are excused from other work responsibilities, nor do they receive any additional compensation except traveling expenses and compensation for time spent at meetings held during working hours (members are expected to give up part of their leisure time).

Workers' councils occasionally call general meetings of the work collectives to discuss the performance of the enterprise, to examine major problems, to hear reports by the workers' council on its operations, and to discuss the annual proposed production plans of the enterprise before they are adopted by the workers' councils. Occasion-

ally referenda are held by the councils in which the members of larger units vote on fundamental questions. The most common issue on which referenda are held has been the distribution of enterprise income. The rule of self-management bodies is that decisions should be made by consensus. If there are protracted delays or deadlocks, however, decisions can be made in the basic work units by majority vote. In other bodies a temporary decision may be taken until consensus is reached. At least since 1975, in some instances the assemblies of communes have been able to impose decisions on enterprises or associations of enterprises if they are not able to reach a consensus on how to proceed (Schrenk et al., 1979:44).

Over time, and especially in the 1965-74 period of decentralization, the social composition of the workers' councils and management boards shifted radically against blue-collar workers and in favor of technical experts, as a large number of junior economists, technologists, junior engineers, and foremen were elected. The higher the body, the stronger this trend. For example, in 1960, 76.2 percent of the members of the workers' councils were workers and 23.8 percent were technical employees, while in 1970, 67.6 percent were workers and 32.4 percent technical employees. The number of those with higher and advanced technical education grew especially rapidly, from 4.2 percent to 10.1 percent (see Table 6.7).

The social composition of management boards meanwhile declined from 67.2 percent workers in 1960 to 44.2 percent in 1970, while the percentage of technical employees grew from 32.8 percent to 55.8 percent and the percentage of those with higher or advanced technical education, from 11.0 percent to 27.8 percent (see Obradovic and Dunn, 1978:344).

The most extreme tendency of all was observed in the social composition of the presidents of the workers' councils. While in 1962, 74.1 percent of the presidents were workers, in 1970, 51.2 percent were. On the other hand, in 1962, 4.4 percent of the presidents were nonworkers with a higher or advanced education, whereas in 1970, 18.9 percent were (see Table 6.8).

The increasing domination of workers' councils by the technical staff led to a major reform in 1974. According to the 1974 Constitution, neither members of the managerial nor the technical staff could be elected to either the workers' councils or the management boards (Rusinow, 1977:329).



**Table 6.7. Social Composition of Workers' Councils\* in Yugoslavia, 1960 and 1970**

	(percent)	
	1960	1970
Total membership in workers' councils	156,300	135,204
Workers (total)	(76.2)	(67.6)
Highly qualified	15.1	17.2
Qualified	40.5	33.7
Semiqualfified	13.4	9.0
Nonqualified	7.2	7.4
Industrial trainees	0.0	0.3
Other employees (total)	(23.8)	(32.4)
With higher and advanced technical education	4.2	10.1
With secondary technical education	12.0	15.9
With lower technical education	7.6	6.4
	(100.0)	(100.0)

\*Central workers' councils only, those at the "top" of the enterprise.

Source: Obradovic and Dunn, 1978:343.

### **The Decision-Making Process within Workers' Councils Before 1975**

The issues most discussed at meetings of the Yugoslav workers' councils have been labor productivity, distribution of net receipts, sales, and investments. In 1964, one-third of agenda items consisted of direct worker issues—distribution of net receipts, vocational training, and fringe benefits—while two-thirds dealt with general issues of enterprise management—productivity, sales, investment, cooperation with other enterprises, and evaluation of the work of the director and the management board. The issues that generate the most animated discussion and the highest degree of participation, and tend to last the longest, however, are those dealing with the dis-

Table 6.8. Social Compositions of Presidents of Workers' Councils in Yugoslavia, 1962 and 1970

	(percent)	
	1962	1970
Total presidents of workers' councils	7,796	6,356
Workers (total)	(74.1)	(51.2)
Highly qualified	27.1	26.1
Qualified	38.2	22.3
Semiqualfified	5.9	2.0
Nonqualified	2.8	0.8
Other employees (total)	(25.9)	(48.8)
With higher and advanced technical education	4.4	18.9
With secondary technical education	13.5	23.3
With lower technical education	8.0	6.6
	(100.0)	(100.0)

Source: Obradovic and Dunn, 1978:345.

tribution of the net income of the unit, personnel questions such as dismissals, and working conditions. Sometimes meetings on these topics have lasted for three or four days before a satisfactory outcome is reached (see International Labour Organisation, 1962:97; Wachtel, 1973:68).

One study found that 59 percent of workers expressed a desire to participate in decision making having to do with discipline and labor relations, 50 percent in those having to do with working conditions, 48 percent in those having to do with the distribution of personal income, 40 percent in decisions having to do with hiring and firing, but only 28 percent desired to participate in investment decisions and 17 percent in those involving marketing (Wachtel, 1973:92).

Studies of the level of participation desired by workers in different kinds of decisions showed that in most cases workers are content with the right to veto decisions that they do not like, and to make proposals, rather than to participate fully in the decision-making



process. For example, a study found that 58.7 percent of all enterprise employees merely desired to be informed of or have the right to veto decisions on sales, marketing, and pricing, while only 17.2 percent wanted to be fully involved in such decision making. On the other hand, about half wanted to be fully involved in decisions having to do with labor problems and work discipline, as well as with questions of income distribution, with about a quarter content merely to be informed or to have the right of veto (Obradovic and Dunn, 1978:210).

Meetings of workers' councils, at least before the reforms of 1974 and 1976, were normally dominated by the nonvoting managerial and technical staff. Studies of the decision-making process of such bodies have found that in almost all cases the managerial or expert staff made a proposal to the workers' councils that was accepted without modification, and very frequently by unanimous vote (voting is public and recorded). One study found that 98 percent of all decisions were identical to the proposals originally made by experts and managers, and that in less than 1 percent of cases was the final decision substantially different from that initially proposed by the professional or managerial staff (in the majority of these cases, the rejection of the managerial staff's proposals was on the issue of the dismissal of workers). Studies of the meetings of workers' councils have found that the administrative staff consumed about 80 percent of the total time spent in discussion and made about 75 percent of all proposals put before the councils. Thus, it would seem that the workers' councils normally acted mostly to affirm decisions previously made by managers and technical experts. This rubber-stamp role of the workers' councils would seem to account for their difficulty in securing quorums (Obradovic and Dunn, 1978:243-71).

Studies of participation by occupation in the decision making of workers' councils have found that even in the areas with the greatest worker interest, such as personal income distribution, the discussions have been overwhelmingly dominated by the managerial and expert staff. For example, one study found that 81 percent of the time of such discussions was used by those with higher or polytechnical education and only 5.1 percent of the time was used by skilled, semi-skilled, or unskilled blue-collar workers. Further, 87.0 percent of all proposals that were accepted were initiated by the former group and only 5.0 percent of those accepted were initiated by the latter. Even stronger results were obtained when areas such as marketing, rela-

tions with other enterprises, and internal economic issues were examined (see Obradovic and Dunn, 1978:255).

The differential participation in workers' "self-management bodies" is greatest at the higher levels and least at the lowest levels (the councils of the basic work units). For example, one study found that only 2.9 percent of the contributions to meetings of the management boards were by their voting members, while 34.6 percent were by the nonvoting administrative staff. In the enterprise workers' councils 8.0 percent of contributions were by elected members, compared with 29.0 percent by the nonvoting staff; in the councils of the basic work organizations, 19.7 percent were by the elected members and 16.8 percent by the nonvoting staff (the balance of verbal contributions in all cases were by the elected chairperson). Thus, it is clear that the administrative staff has had the overwhelmingly largest degree of influence (Obradovic and Dunn, 1978:268).

Members of the workers' councils perceive different groups as having different degrees of influence over different kinds of decisions. For example, a study done in 1974 found that in one enterprise 63 percent of the members of workers' councils felt that management exerted the greatest influence over long-term planning, compared with only 8 percent who thought that either workers as a whole or the members of the workers' council played such a leading role. The comparable figures for investment decisions were 40 percent and 16 percent, with 39 percent thinking the leading role was played by the technical specialists. In contrast, 37 percent of the members of the councils felt that workers or they themselves had greatest influence over hiring and firing, versus 13 percent who thought management had the greatest power in this area. Relatively high degrees of influence for workers' council members were also perceived in matters of distribution of apartments (55 percent), nominating of supervisors (36 percent), and setting criteria for wages (29 percent). Fifty-seven percent of workers' council members thought that technical specialists played the leading role in establishing work norms, compared with only 7 percent who thought the leading role in this area belonged to council members or all workers.

Overall, of the 13 areas of decision making, workers' council members thought they themselves exerted the most power in three, with top management exerting the most power in six, and the technical experts in two. On average they perceived top management to be



slightly more influential than themselves, and the technical experts to be slightly less influential (Obradovic and Dunn, 1978:380).

Most studies of enterprise decision making carried out in the 1965–74 period of decentralization found that top management is perceived by all members of the enterprises as having the greatest relative influence, and the professional staff as being the second most influential members of work units.

Before the 1974 and 1976 reforms a rather high percentage of workers felt that the “self-management organs” did not defend workers’ interests. For example, one 1974 study done in enterprises that had had strikes found that 38 percent of all workers did not believe “that self-managing bodies take a workers’ stand.” This study also found that fully 50 percent of workers felt that “management is not satisfying workers’ needs,” and 34 percent felt that they are “frequently treated unjustly” (Obradovic and Dunn, 1978:384). This would seem to be evidence that, at least in some enterprises, workers, or at least the less-skilled, lower-paid, younger workers, who tend to do the less rewarding and lowest-paid work, lacked significant influence over the real decision-making process. It is also evidence that management was able, at least in some instances, to appropriate considerable power to itself.\*

### Election of the Enterprise Director

The mode of selecting directors of enterprises—or, as they have been officially known since the mid-1970s reforms, “individual management organs”—has passed through a number of stages. From 1950 to 1952 the management board of the enterprise hired the director. In 1953 the local government (the commune) selected the directors of the enterprises within their boundaries. Between 1954 and

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\*One study found that 79 percent of workers in “more efficient,” and 47 percent of workers in “less efficient,” enterprises felt either fairly free or completely free to discuss work problems with their supervisors, while only 2 percent of workers in the more efficient and 12 percent of workers in the less efficient enterprises “do not feel free” to discuss such issues. This would seem to indicate that a high level of work-unit solidarity among production workers and administrative staff is compatible with a high degree of worker participation, especially in the enterprises that were running well (Obradovic and Dunn, 1978:285).

Table 6.9. Ranking of Occupational Groups in Terms of Perceived Influence in Enterprises\*: Yugoslavia, 1966-74

Occupational Group	Researcher					
	Zupanov (1966)	Rus (1968)	Kavcic, Rus, and Tannenbaum (1966)	Kavcik (1968)	Mozina and Rus (1969)	Arzensck (1974)
Top management	1	1	1	1	1	1
Workers' council	2	4.5	4	3	3.5	2
Management board	3	4.5	3	2	3.5	—
Professional staff	—	3	—	—	2	3
League of Communists	—	7	—	5	—	—
Middle management	4	2	2	4	—	4
Supervisors	5	6	5	—	5	—
Highly skilled and skilled blue-collar workers	6	8	6	6	6	5
Semi- and unskilled blue-collar workers	6	9	6	7	7	5

\*Ranks are from 1 (highest) to 10 (lowest).

Source: Wachtel, 1973:94; Obradovic and Dunn, 1978:380.



1965 the power of selection was shared between the communes and the workers' councils. Until 1957 the appointment of a director was done by a selection committee that had one-third of its members chosen from the workers' council of an enterprise and two-thirds by the local government. Between 1957 and 1965 the selection committee was balanced 50-50. From the 1965 decentralization reforms to the 1974 recentralization, the director was selected by the workers' council without participation by the local government. Since 1974 the director has been chosen by the workers' council from a list composed by the local government (Moore, 1980:8; Wachtel, 1973:70).

Directors are selected for renewable four-year terms (Rusinow, 1977:329). There seems to be considerable continuity of position. A study done in 1972 showed that about 80 percent of directors are re-appointed (Jambrech, 1975:69). Their continuity of position gives the directors considerable resources—experience, skills, networks—by which to dominate enterprise decision making; this is reinforced by the frequency of circulation of members of the councils and management boards. The director, together with the other top managers, forms a collegium which assists in making the decisions and implements policy. Proposals made by management to the workers' councils or management boards typically originate in this advisory body (Adizes, 1971:46). The committee that selects the director advertises the position and then negotiates with its preferred candidates until a mutually agreeable contract for salary, responsibility, and authority is worked out.\*

In 1965-74 the director candidates came to insist that a fairly high degree of operational decision-making power be granted them by the workers' council before they would agree to assume a position (with the workers' council reserving the power to approve budgets as well as basic policies). The law in 1965-74 allowed a workers' council to cede its management rights to professional managers (see Adizes, 1971:210-12; Schrenk et al., 1979:29). Consequently, the decision-making power of enterprise directors in 1965-74 generally came to be considerably in excess of that guaranteed to them by law—for instance, the allocation and distribution of routine work, the power to order overtime when necessary, and the power to im-

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\*Directors are formally subject to recall at any time on grounds of incompetence, negligence, illegal activities, or the failure to maintain good relations with other bodies (Schrenk et al., 1979:57).

pose minor disciplinary measures (including fines of up to 5 percent of a worker's monthly salary). Formal power to choose the other executives of an enterprise has been vested in the management boards of the enterprises and in work units. However, in 1965-74 the directors normally exerted considerable control over their subordinates' appointments (Adizes, 1971:180).



## The Reversal of Liberalization in Yugoslavia

### —7—

In the early 1970s disenchantment with "liberalization" became widespread as the public mood shifted away from liberalism and back toward Marxist orthodoxy, although a discourse on self-management rather than traditional Leninism was often used. The effects on most workers of the experiment with market socialism were especially negative: increasing inequality, unemployment, inflation. As a result the intellectuals and managers who had formulated and pushed for the implementation of market principles in 1965 found themselves increasingly isolated. A working-class movement grew in strength, demanding the rescinding of the dependence on markets and the reassertion of egalitarianism by political (state and Party) means.

Workers had in good part been convinced in 1965 that market socialism and an enhanced role for workers' councils would result in an all-around improvement in their lives, including a more rapid increase in living standards. When these optimistic predictions were largely frustrated, disillusionment set in. Most workers came to consider the elaborate mechanisms of formal participation in the workers' councils as "all talk," essentially manipulated by the administrative staff (see Comisso, 1979:ch. 6; Rusinow, 1977:ch. 8; Moore, 1980:7-8; Tyson, 1980:chs. 1, 2).

As a result of this movement, the economy was once again politicized and centralized, and the role of markets greatly restricted (but not altogether done away with). The recentralization process occurred in a number of stages between 1972 and 1978, the most im-

portant being the new Constitution of 1974. Indicative of the changing tide was Tito's speech at the conference of the League of Communists in 1972 emphasizing, after a lapse of over a decade, the need for the state to act as a "dictatorship of the proletariat"—this term had been missing from League vocabulary for 13 years. The program adopted at the 1972 conference asserted the need for a significantly expanded role for the League in guiding Yugoslav society.

After a series of ineffective attempts to limit the power of what the Yugoslavs began to refer to as "autonomous financial capital," the Constitution of 1974 stipulated (implemented in the Banking Law of January 1978) that investment banking be fundamentally reorganized to make it responsible to the working class and the goals of the national plan. The autonomy of banks was radically reduced. Banks can now be established by self-management agreements among the basic organizations of associated labor (BOALs), enterprises, or other social entities (excluding sociopolitical units), and are responsible to all who regularly use their services, on the basis of one vote per organization (not proportionate voting corresponding to initial capital contributions). Banks are now required to participate in the planning process, preparing and negotiating both one-year and five-year plans stipulating the amount and kinds of investment funding. These plans have to be integrated into the national plan and affirmed by the members of the bank, who must consolidate the bank's plans with their own (see Schrenk et al., 1979:161–62; Rusinow, 1977:329).

The post-1974 system of social compacts among republics and communes establishes the broad guidelines of price policy for a year. These guidelines, however, are not legally binding. The agreements among enterprises that establish prices to be used in exchanges among themselves slow down, but do not eliminate, the tendency for prices to rise. Nevertheless, because inflation is built into the self-management agreements and because most enterprises have significant *de facto* authority to increase their prices in response to "market conditions" and "world prices," a considerable degree of inflation is still part of the system (see Tyson, 1980:84; Schrenk et al., 1979:121).

Price controls were reinstituted in 1976 to reduce the accelerating rate of inflation (Tyson, 1980:84). About 80 percent of all products came under federal supervision, and thus their price increases were made subject to review by the Federal Bureau of Prices. Commodities not subject to government price controls are those with little



impact on industrial production or the cost of living. Prices of about one-third of federally reviewed products (largely consumer goods) are not under any direct controls, and thus enterprises can normally set their prices according to what the market will bear. Price changes can also be made without federal approval for certain raw materials and production inputs so long as prices stay in line with world prices and the producers agree among themselves on what the price level will be (this covers about one-fourth of the goods under federal jurisdiction). The rest of federally supervised prices must get prior approval from the Federal Bureau of Prices. The prices of some essential commodities, such as power, rents, and railway fees, are set through direct price administration. Most requested increases based on "market conditions" and/or international price changes are approved, thus allowing inflation to continue (Tyson, 1980:79; Schrenk et al., 1979:121).

Workers' rights in their jobs were strengthened in the 1974-76 reforms. They can now be dismissed only in instances of criminal behavior or severe misconduct. Workers can no longer be discharged merely because their labor is no longer needed. The work unit, the enterprise, or an association of enterprises must now provide redundant workers with equivalent employment (Schrenk et al., 1979:55). The reestablishment of firm rights of workers to their jobs abolished the operation of labor markets, since workers could no longer be fired simply because their enterprise had no work for them to do. Yugoslavia thus reverted to the predominant practice of the other socialist countries in this regard.

With the 1974-76 reforms the minimum wage came to be guaranteed through an interenterprise "solidarity fund." Further, income that accrues to an enterprise through exceptionally favorable conditions is now excluded from its income available for distribution. Moreover, since 1974 the distribution of income has been largely predetermined by the social compacts and self-management agreements (see Schrenk et al., 1979:55).

The power of enterprise directors was broken in 1974 by establishing BOALs as the fundamental decision-making organs in the economy. The BOALs were thought to be much more easily controlled by workers than the larger and more complex enterprises.

A BOAL is defined as the smallest work unit producing a marketable output and able to be evaluated independently of the results of other work units. For example, a textile mill would probably be

divided into separate BOALs for weaving, spinning, finishing, and sales. The size of BOALs varies from a few dozen workers to more than a thousand.

Each BOAL, with its own workers' council and management board, has the authority to make the decisions affecting its work process and the distribution of its output, including the distribution of net income and investment, as well as the right to separate from an enterprise and join another (so long as the survival of the remaining BOALs in an enterprise is not endangered). The BOALs of a given enterprise work out self-management agreements among themselves through a process of iterative projections and negotiations until consensus is reached—or is mandated by external bodies in the event of deadlock—and between the BOALs of any given enterprise and the rest of the economy (which are binding on all participants)—that is, a coordinated enterprise and national plan is worked out to guide production. The self-management agreements within an enterprise determine the distribution of earnings, provide for joint capital investment, and define the responsibilities of each BOAL both toward the others and toward the enterprise as a whole.

Both the BOALs and the enterprises are integrated into a national plan—the details of which are negotiated among all BOALs and larger units—that includes targets for wages, prices, and investment, consequently giving markets little room to operate. The reorganization of the Yugoslav economy was fundamental. It could no longer accurately be called a market socialism.

The federal government's role in investment financing and planning once again became central, as did its role in the distribution of raw materials and intermediate goods. The central government once more provided detailed targets for priority sectors, which encompassed at least half of total resources. Five-year plans became the operational guidelines of economic activity, with the details being worked out through a protracted iterative process between the central planning agencies, the local and regional governments, the BOALs, and the enterprises, with the trade unions and especially the League of Communists playing a guiding role. Although the rhetoric of the post-1974 planning process is quite different from that of the pre-1960s Yugoslav system, or of that of the other socialist countries, the process of planning in fact works much like the theory of planning in countries with the standard Soviet model—albeit with more



thoroughly decentralized participation than is probably normally the case elsewhere.

The Yugoslav planning process now begins with the passage of a federal law on the preparation of the plan. This law provides a list of indicators that must be prepared and a common method that must be followed by all units. Federal and regional planning institutes then review and evaluate economic developments and performance over the previous planning period, and identify the problems that must be addressed over the next five-year period. The planning agencies sketch out alternative scenarios of five-year targets based on different assumptions about macroeconomic parameters. The evaluations, assumptions, and alternative scenarios on priorities and broad targets are then submitted to the federal, regional, and communal assemblies for discussion. The political bodies choose from among the scenarios laid out by the planning bodies.

The various local, regional, and federal bodies exchange the tentative plans they have adopted and then, in conjunction with the trade unions, engage in an iterative process of negotiation to "harmonize" them into one unified national plan. The iterative process of mutual negotiation continues until a consensus is reached or deadlocks are broken by state, legislative, or judicial decree. The final plan is approved by legislative bodies at the local, regional, and national levels (Schrenk et al., 1979:75-76).

Once the standard set of indicators that describe prevailing economic conditions and resources, as well as expectations of performance over the five-year period, are adopted, each basic work unit, as well as all other economic agents in the economy, begin working on their own specific plans. Within the broad parameters of the tentative social plan, each BOAL and enterprise then develops a concrete plan for its operations over the five-year planning period. The unit plans are then coordinated with those of other BOALs and enterprises through a process of iterative negotiations that also melds them with the plans originating with the state.

Each basic work unit evaluates its performance over the previous planning period, sets out its expectations and aspirations for the next five-year period, and specifies its requirements for inputs of raw materials, labor investment, and financing, as well as its prospective level, composition, and pricing of output. In a process of "harmonization," these initial projections are exchanged and coordinated with

those of other units in ad hoc working committees, enterprise associations, and the state economic chambers.

The final negotiated projections are then codified into self-management agreements among the BOALs. The state requires that the negotiating process reach a conclusion within a specified period in all priority areas of the economy (which include more than half of all resources). In the event it does not, agreements are imposed by state bodies. Once reached, agreements become legally binding on all participants. In cases of default on such agreements and unresolvable conflicts among units, the government (communal, regional, or federal) can impose a temporary or permanent solution. In nonpriority areas, although the government requires all BOALs to engage in a process of negotiation, it is not necessary that agreements actually be reached (Schrenk et al., 1979:56, 75, 183-85).\*

Self-management agreements can be legally defaulted on only because of conditions beyond the control of the parties to them—or because of changes in priorities decreed by higher bodies. Such defaults, however, are severely penalized; financial compensation must be made to the parties that suffer from a default (Schrenk et al., 1979:52).

Self-management agreements must be published before they can be implemented. Organizations such as trade unions, local government, and other enterprises or basic work units that think they might be adversely affected by such proposed agreements can, by objecting to their implementation, require the parties to reexamine the agreements. If the objections are not withdrawn after such reexamination (and perhaps modification), the disputed agreement is brought before a special court for compulsory arbitration. Such courts also settle other disputes arising out of self-management agreements (Schrenk et al., 1979:52). This practice greatly limits the opportunity for monopolistic or other self-serving practices to arise.

Self-management agreements concluded among economic units through the iterative process are negotiated within the framework established by "social compacts," which are usually either implemented by government units (communal, regional, or federal) or

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\*The full cycle of developing the five-year plan, which involves many time-consuming iterations among many different units, in the last half of the 1970s took two to three years. The costs in time, especially of administrators and technical staff, are thus considerable (Schrenk et al., 1979:79).



concluded among economic units under a mandate from government bodies. Such social compacts establish rights and obligations affecting broader economic issues and policies than do the self-management agreements (which focus on details)—for example, the priorities of social plans; the criteria and principles of pricing, employment, and international trade policy; the distribution of income between personal consumption and capital accumulation. Such social compacts have the force of law. Once concluded, they cannot be abrogated before the stipulated expiration time, except by agreement of all parties, including the relevant government units (see Schrenk et al., 1979:50).

In general, the state guides the establishment of consensus on broad objectives and policy guidelines, monitors the implementation and effects of the plans, and resolves conflicts among units in the interest of realizing the objectives of the central plan. Since the melding of the "social" plan and the "self-management" plans is encompassed in legally binding "social compacts" and "self-management agreements," discretionary intervention by the various levels of government over the life of the five-year plans occurs only in the event of default on agreements or deadlocks between units, in those areas either specified by prior agreement in the various social compacts and agreements or through the general manipulation of macroeconomic parameters.

Enterprise autonomy, although radically reduced from what it was before 1974, is still significantly greater than in most other socialist countries. This autonomy is, however, primarily (but certainly not entirely) manifested in participation in the process of constructing the national plan and in nonpriority activities—to the extent an enterprise or BOAL does not sign self-management agreements with other units.

The first set of social compacts largely recentralized the distribution of enterprise income. In 1975 firms with above-average productivity increases were required to devote larger proportions of their income to savings in order to keep the growth of wages within the limits defined by the average rate of growth of productivity in each republic. Income accruing to an enterprise from tariffs or monopolies also had to be earmarked for investment (see Comisso, 1979:127).

Since prices, the level of output, and raw materials inputs are stipulated in the legally binding agreements among enterprises, and

because the state mandates such agreements in the priority sectors, priority sectors are ensured the provision of necessary inputs at the agreed prices. Thus, if shortages develop, it is the nonpriority sectors that suffer. In other words, the operation of the price mechanism in the distribution of goods is greatly limited in the new system of planning.

Because of the stipulation of prices in the five-year agreements, the state's reassertion of the primary role in investment, the new guarantees against dismissal of workers (even when there is no work to be done), and the highly detailed, comprehensive, and legally binding five-year plans, it is now most difficult to make a case that Yugoslavia is essentially a market economy rather than a centrally planned economy. The role of enterprise autonomy would now appear to be largely concentrated in the five-year process of plan negotiation and in nonessential sectors. But even here, autonomy (and the role of markets) has been greatly limited by requirements that in priority areas, if work units do not reach a consensus, the state will impose a solution—as well as by the strong role of the League of Communists (and to a lesser degree the trade unions) in guiding the process of the emergence of the national plan.

The state manipulates the basic macroeconomic factors in order to guide the economy in the desired direction—for instance, it controls various kinds of expenditures, such as business investment, in order to establish aggregate demand. Such controls have included the requirement that enterprises deposit a certain sum and secure prior guarantees of financing before they can initiate an investment project. Further, enterprises must secure prior approval for new investment projects from the appropriate republic or communal economic chamber before they can be initiated. However, it should be noted that even since the 1974 reforms, the enterprises have maintained considerable investment discretion within the parameters of expanded state control over the financing of investment.

The state has also periodically instituted price and credit freezes. It does not, however, use monetary or fiscal policy in a major way to regulate the economy. Neither does it have an effective incomes policy, since enterprises, although limited by the necessities of the self-management agreement process, retain considerable autonomy over their wage funds and pay schedules. They continue to distribute much of enterprise profits as the variable wage, which varies according to the relative success or failure of an enterprise (Tyson, 1980:ch. 6).



The Yugoslav state, at the communal, republic, and federal levels, normally resists allowing enterprises to go bankrupt and thus close down. More often than not, the appropriate state organ comes to the aid of defaulting enterprises in order to keep them operating, even at a loss—this, of course, dilutes the sense of responsibility of enterprises for their own actions, and is yet another important restriction on the operation of markets in the country; that is, political priorities normally take precedence over the operation of markets (Tyson, 1980:49).

There is relatively little flexibility for the enterprises once the various compacts and agreements are signed. The national planning process is all-embracing, affecting production, investment, and income distribution (Schrenk et al., 1979:79). However, since the premises of the plan can change because of externalities such as changed prices in the world market, or because internal problems of coordination develop, the five-year contractual agreements must from time to time be modified as adjustments have to be made in the five-year plan (see Schrenk et al., 1979:79–80). There is also a significant degree of looseness in the plan because of the still significant level of decentralization in the plan formulation process, as well as because of the limited role of markets and enterprise autonomy. Thus, although the central plan has since 1974 been primary, Yugoslavia remains the most decentralized and market-oriented of the socialist countries, as manifested in exceptionally high levels of inflation and unemployment.

### **The Unions and the League of Communists**

The Yugoslav unions both play an important economic role and are responsive to workers' concerns and particular interests. Virtually all workers in Yugoslavia belong to trade unions. One of the primary functions of Yugoslav unions since the mid-1970s has been to guide the self-management process in the basic work units and enterprises. Unions initiate self-management agreements among the BOALs and enterprises within a given sector, in matters concerning the distribution of personal income as well as other questions affecting the condition of workers (see Schrenk et al., 1979:49). They play an active role in the deliberations of the self-management bodies. The unions take an especially active role in questions of the division of an enterprise's net income between wages and investment, usually

arguing that a high proportion of net income should be allocated to investment for the long-term good of the work units as well as Yugoslav society as a whole, and that workers should receive a reasonable wage. The evidence is that the unions, unlike their "official" counterparts in Poland, maintain the support of the working class. One study found that 48 percent of workers felt that their union was fully or partially representative of workers' interests, and only 11 percent felt that it was not; 38 percent did not express an opinion (see Obradovic and Dunn, 1978:386).

The Yugoslav League of Communists (the Communist Party) has a significantly higher degree of authority and ability to mobilize than does its Polish counterpart, for substantial historical reasons. In the liberalization reforms of 1965 the League was reorganized, with small units being dissolved and large-scale organizations created in their place that were based either on enterprises as a whole (one organization per enterprise) or on the commune (one organization per commune). This meant that most individual Communists were members of both an economic and a geographic organization, each of rather large size. Each organization elected a conference every two years, which in turn elected an administrative League committee to guide its day-to-day affairs (Rusinow, 1977:20). The League resolved to reduce its guiding role, reaffirming that its function was to offer inspiration and ideas to convince others of the League's program, not to make decisions in place of the masses of workers. Further, a greater role was allowed for differences among League members, including public disagreements after a policy had been enacted. A commitment was made to operate by consensus and to reduce the role of central Party bodies in favor of grass-roots participation (see Adizes, 1971:199; Jambrek, 1975:122; Tyson, 1980:29; Rusinow, 1977:75, 201).

However, these measures were largely reversed as the League was tightened up, in stages, between 1971 and 1974. Its role in formulating the basic goals of the society and economy; in coordination, especially of the complex process of constructing the five-year economic plans; in the selection of enterprise management; and in all-around inspiration and control has been significantly enhanced. Its program and ideology now again serve as the concrete guidelines for the development of Yugoslav society. The League congress first sets out the objectives of the five-year plans as well as the overall priorities of Yugoslav society. Since the 1974 strengthening of the role of the



League, it is Party resolutions that are the principal force in establishing the broad direction of the process of formulating the plan, with all its social compacts, self-management agreements, and iterations. Although the League of Communists' resolutions have no legal force per se, the fact that the organization is so large (about 15 percent of adults are members), disciplined (all members must carry out its resolutions), and respected by most Yugoslavs gives it tremendous influence in all stages of economic decision making, from the planning councils and federal legislation down to the BOALs.

At the landmark League congress in 1974, which initiated a new Constitution, essentially recentralizing the economy and radically reducing the power and prerogatives of the managerial stratum as well as the role of markets, Tito repudiated the rhetoric, common in the 1960s, that the state was becoming "superfluous" as both it and the League were withering away in the face of the growing power of self-management. He argued that "while classes still exist, the state will also exist as a weapon in the hands of the [working] class." During the later 1970s the state and the League both came to play a significantly more powerful role in directing the society and economy than they had since the 1950s (see Oleszczuk, 1980).

The League redefined itself in classical Marxist-Leninist terms as the representative of the "direct producers," abandoning its recent self-categorization as a harmonizer of the pluralistic interests of the "working people." The Leninist conception of the Party was once again celebrated. The redefinition and reenergizing of the League led it once again to an interventionist role in society. Marxist studies were reemphasized in the universities, major leadership changes occurred in the mass organizations, the editors of several major newspapers and journals were changed. The tightening-up process included the formal abandonment of the principle of operating by consensus as well as the limitation of public dissent by League members. There was a general recentralization of authority at all levels of the organization (Tyson, 1980:8, 29; Schrenk et al., 1979:48-49). In addition to being restored as the *de facto* authority in Yugoslav society, the League was given direct representation in leading state bodies.

The strengthening of the League of Communists over the 1970s gave coherence to the new economic organization and provided a means of revitalizing national cooperation and mobilization. The League and the central planning agencies were *de facto* restored to



their traditional role in establishing the fundamental goals of the operative five-year plans, including guidance of investment, as well as in ensuring the smooth development of a national consensus in the BOALs and other units on the details of its implementation. The League of Communists and the trade unions have come to play a key role in coordinating the process of establishing the self-management agreements and their overall coordination into the national plan, especially in maximizing the probabilities of realizing the national priorities specified in the tentative social plan. Further, the Party and the unions are empowered to develop, and if necessary to enforce, resolutions of intraenterprise conflicts that result in deadlocks (see Schrenk et al., 1979:49, 52; Rusinow, 1977:329, 338-39).

The League of Communists maintains a high degree of respect and influence among Yugoslav working people. A study done in 1974 found that 46 percent of workers felt that the League of Communists either fully or partially represented their interests, while only 13 percent felt that it did not; 41 percent expressed no opinion. The League's influence among members of workers' councils was especially high; 57 percent of workers on such bodies felt that the League represented workers' interests, in contrast with 16 percent who felt that it did not (Obradovic and Dunn, 1978:386).

Over the period of liberalization the role of the working class in the League weakened, while that of the intelligentsia was enhanced. The percentage of League members who were either blue-collar workers or peasants stood at 78 percent in 1948. But it had shrunk to 47 percent in 1958 and 44 percent in 1964. The percentage who were blue-collar workers, however, rose slightly over the period. In 1946, 30 percent were blue-collar workers; in 1958, 33 percent; and in 1964, 36 percent. Over the decade of liberalization (1964-74) the percentage of workers declined from 36 percent to 30 percent, and that of workers and peasants combined declined from 44 percent to 36 percent. Meanwhile, the proportion of Party members who were professionals and white-collar workers rose from 14 percent in 1948 to 35 percent in 1958, 39 percent in 1964, and 42 percent in 1974 (Shoup, 1981:tables B-7, B-10). These tendencies contrast with the comparable figures in Poland during the 1970s. The League has been especially strong among highly skilled blue-collar workers (35 percent were members in 1966) and professionals and administrators (59 percent of those with a college education and 44 percent of those with a university education were members) (Wachtel, 1973:81). This



suggests the strong role that such groups (as in Poland) have played in the League, and thus their disproportional influence in the process of guiding society.

## Summary

An examination of the effects of the introduction of the logic of markets into the Yugoslav economy, especially during the period of its virtually uninhibited operation (1965-74), shows that it produced a fundamental subversion of the goals of socialism. Inequality among regions, between the urban and rural areas, among industries, among classes and strata, and within the working class were all aggravated. Economic growth slowed. Massive unemployment became a serious problem. Inflation ran rampant. The necessity to maximize profits within the logic of markets frustrated the operation of workers' councils as well as the process of selecting enterprise management. Financial institutions and directors were able to accumulate great prerogatives and privilege at the expense of the working class. It is clear that the introduction of similar processes into Polish society, as the Solidarity intellectuals advocated, would have produced equally disastrous results. This should also have been clear to the Solidarity intellectuals.

The problems produced by the introduction of markets into Yugoslav society led to a popular reaction against the intelligentsia and the managerial stratum, as well as a popular demand to recentralize the economy, strengthen the Party, and reorient Yugoslav society in the direction of planned growth, increased equality, and full employment. The role of the Yugoslav League of Communists in the process of reversing liberalization in response to popular concerns and demands, as well as the strong role of the League-guided "official" trade unions, shows that such bodies can, and often do, serve as authentic instruments of working-class power.

One of the most important lessons to be learned from the Yugoslav experience is the long-term movement in popular opinion and enthusiasm that develops in reaction to changes in policies. The popular mood in Yugoslavia in the early 1960s was one of accepting the intelligentsia's promises of the increased democratization and living standards that are incumbent on putting markets in command and giving full authority to enterprise councils. The implementation of

these policies within a few years produced a popular reaction. Enthusiasm for a return to more orthodox Marxist-Leninist policies, which seemed to have been proved correct by practice, was regenerated.

The fact that the various popular attempts to decentralize Polish socialism, especially the full implementation of workers' councils, have been systematically frustrated by Poland's leaders (however well intentioned) has meant that instead of the Polish people learning lessons for themselves, they have become increasingly inactive, cynical, or grossly romantic and unrealistic in their aspirations. There is much to be said for the potentialities of the people learning from their own mistakes. Indeed, the Polish disaster—and the serious undermining, if not collapse, of the authority of the Polish Party—together with the reversal of the Yugoslav experiment—and the still high level of authority of the Yugoslav League of Communists—speaks to the relative merits of the two approaches.



# Conclusion

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The last generation, a time in which a wide variety of socialist societies have for the first time existed, has provided us with a rich source of data on the possibilities and viability of different modes of socialism. Socialism in the post-World War II world is no longer an idea about which to theorize in the abstract, nor is it any longer identified with the experience of a single country. The Yugoslav experience, together with that of the Cubans in the 1960s and the Chinese from 1958 to the mid-1970s, strongly suggests an important principle of socialist transformation.

The Cubans in the mid-1960s attempted to create a socialist society with an exceptionally high level of both central planning, with a correspondingly low level of decentralized decision making, and equality (regional, urban-rural, between the intelligentsia and workers, and among workers) (see MacEwan, 1981; Silverman, 1973). They also put heavy emphasis on building consciousness and utilizing moral incentives in place of material incentives, while eliminating virtually the entire independent petty bourgeoisie. Steps were taken to minimize the role of money while maximizing the free distribution of goods and services on the basis of need. Such policies resulted in serious economic problems as well as in major inefficiencies and low productivity. In 1968 the Cubans reversed course, beginning the decentralization of decision making with their campaign for popular power and creating a participatory Party structure and introducing more economic incentives. Their experience led them to

move toward the model of socialist transformation pioneered by the Soviet Union.

Beginning in 1958 with the Great Leap Forward and again after 1965, with the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the Chinese attempted to institutionalize a form of socialism that was more participatory and decentralized than that of the Soviets. This experiment relied greatly on the enthusiasm and initiative of the working people, put a great emphasis on moral incentives and political ideology, was hostile to the intelligentsia and their minor privileges, and attempted to undermine the division between mental and manual labor. Even more than in Cuba and Yugoslavia, the "Maoist" variant of socialism produced both serious economic problems and unnecessary and counterproductive internal conflicts. As a result, as was the case in the other two countries, a strong movement emerged to reverse the "Maoist experiment" and reinstitutionalize a form of socialism very close to that of the Soviets but with a somewhat greater degree of decentralization, perhaps comparable with that of Hungary or post-1974 Yugoslavia (see Andors, 1977; Bettelheim, 1974; Schram, 1973; Sidel, 1974; Wheelwright and McFarlane, 1970).

The lessons of Yugoslavia, Cuba, and China are profound. First, there appears to be a rather limited range of viable options for successful socialist transition, especially at a given level of development of the productive forces. Something very much like the model developed by the Soviet Union on the basis of hard experience appears to be the most effective way to maximize economic growth, social equity, social welfare (distribution by need), popular participation, and national defense while retaining popular legitimacy. The specific form of this model, it should be stressed, would seem to change somewhat as a result of such factors as level of industrialization, degree of legitimacy, and the state of the world capitalist system.

Further, there appear to be powerful, indigenous counterforces that operate to push societies that attempt radically different forms of socialism back toward this model. This means that socialism would appear to be a specific, strong, and stable mode of production that cannot easily slip back into capitalism, develop into some form of bureaucratic collectivism (or other non-capitalist/non-socialist state mode of production), or drift into stagnation and decay. Indeed, it would appear that in socialist societies, processes are in operation that are analogous to those in advanced capitalist societies that



tend to produce relative homogeneity regardless of the initial ideology of the leading party, the character of the leaders, or the particularities of national culture. That is, especially at a given level of the forces of production, there is a very limited range of viable social, economic, and political options within any given viable mode of production.

Last, the experiences of Yugoslavia, Cuba, and China, as well as the counterexample of Poland, show the positive effects on education and legitimation where the masses of people learn from their own experience. Both the intelligentsia and the masses of working people in a socialist society occasionally become captivated by ideas of a national or innovative form of socialism. When such ideas are put into place, as they were in Yugoslavia, Cuba, and China, and eventually are found to be seriously wanting, people learn, and as a result modify their vision, generally coming back with enthusiasm to something like the earlier forms on the basis of their proven viability. When the possibilities of instituting other forms of socialism are blocked, as they have been in Poland, neither the intelligentsia nor the masses of working people have the opportunity to learn on the basis of their experience.

Thus enthusiasm wanes, and a combination of cynicism born of frustration and unrealistic romanticism born of lack of experience comes to prevail. Marxism-Leninism becomes tired and seemingly irrelevant cant. Technocracy and bureaucratization substitute for politicization, the authority of both Marxism and the Party is undermined, and the conditions for recurrent crises are established. Ever more fantastic ideas about what could be possible and how to realize romantic visions, as the experience of Solidarity showed, can periodically flourish in such an environment. Technocracy and bureaucracy produce such romantic reactions as anarco-syndicalism, messianic faith in free markets, and illusions of Ronald Reagan as liberator. Indeed, it would appear that it is under such conditions—and not the path followed by Yugoslavia—that the possibilities of a capitalist restoration are the greatest, as is the need for force, internal or external, to maintain a socialist mode of production in the face of a lack of popular enthusiasm.

Before reviewing the nature of the 1980–81 crisis, it should be observed that nothing having the characteristics of a ruling class with privileges and power comparable with those of capitalist or pre-capitalist class societies exists in Poland. Since the expropriation of

the private property of the wealthy after the war, it is clear that an analogue of a propertied ruling class would have to be all or part of the leading Party officials, the leading state officials, and/or the top enterprise managers. First, the differences between the income, wealth, privileges, and life-style of these groups and the working class is at best similar to the comparable differences between the petty bourgeoisie and the working class in the West—that is, their privileges are petty, qualitatively less than those of any propertied ruling class in history. Second, their position is precarious and not transferable. This has been demonstrated by the balloting for the new Central Committee and Politburo chosen in July 1981, as well as by the periodic displacement of the top leadership (in 1956, 1970, and 1980) and the continual replacement of enterprise management. It is also shown by the strong rights in their jobs, as well as point-of-production power, of the urban working class. No propertied ruling class in history ever had so little security of position or so little control over their own destiny.

Last, the upheavals of 1956, 1970, and 1980 showed that the working class can exert qualitatively more influence in Polish society, even if it has to go outside established—and bureaucratized—channels, with qualitatively less repression or resistance than has ever been the case in any society dominated by a propertied ruling class. If, in fact, there was a propertied ruling class—as, for example, in Argentina, Chile, El Salvador, the Philippines, Indonesia, West Germany, Italy, Greece, France, or Spain—it would react in ways similar to those of the ruling classes of these countries to massive demonstrations and strikes of workers: massive, violent repression and systematic murder when necessary. Instead, the Polish regime has acted in a qualitatively different way, indicating a qualitatively different type of social organization. Where else would Lech Walesa have been interned in a palace for one year, or picked up and driven around the city for a few hours, rather than getting a bullet in the neck?

In conclusion, it should be obvious to any unbiased observer that there is nothing comparable to a capitalist or state bureaucratic ruling class in Poland. As bureaucratized or technocratically oriented as the power structure in Poland might have been (and may be), it represents a qualitatively more egalitarian and responsive kind of social order than any previously existing class society. Indeed, given the radical egalitarian social and economic transformations of



the postwar period, it is clear that the Polish social structure behaves rather like an authentic (if distorted) socialism. That is, it operates in the fundamental interests of the Polish working class and, perhaps more important, benefits this class relative to any other group with alleged "real economic ownership." Thus, it must be categorized as essentially a socialist society.

The explanations of the Polish events most common in the West share the fatal flaw of ignoring both comparative evidence and a realistic evaluation of the historical dimension. Socialism was not forced on the Polish people by the Red Army. The state and Party have not been insensitive to the needs of the people, nor have they otherwise followed grossly self-serving or incompetent policies such as fundamentally "mismanaging the economy." The Polish experience does not show that socialism doesn't work, or that Polish workers have rejected socialist institutions.

In fact, there was an authentic socialist revolution in Poland, backed by the substantial majority of the working class, although the Communist Party was weaker here than in many other countries where socialism has come to power, largely because of the events of 1938–39. Many other socialist revolutions were aided by the Soviet Army—North Korea, Bulgaria, Romania, Mongolia, the Central Asian republics of the USSR—and have proved very stable, even though in many cases the initial base of the Communists was as small as or smaller than in Poland in 1943. The Polish Communist Party during the 1940s was led by the same kind of dedicated idealists who led socialist revolutions in other countries. Therefore, any special bureaucratic tendencies, corruption, or loss of energy of the Party's leaders, as well as mistaken policies, must be traced to special Polish conditions. Socialism in most other countries—Bulgaria, Romania, Mongolia, the USSR, Cuba, Vietnam, Albania, Yugoslavia, contemporary Hungary and China—works well while maintaining the authentic support of most of their people.

The Polish crisis of 1980–81 was overdetermined by a number of forces, including the relative weakness of the Party's popular support in 1938–43; the international crisis of 1948–55, which artificially accelerated the process of socialist transformation in Poland; the exceptional strength (for historical reasons) of both the chauvinist intelligentsia and the Catholic Church hierarchy; the fact that the Party, due to a relatively weak position that forced it into compromises, was never able to effectively destroy the ideological power of the intelli-



gentsia and the Church; the "Polish economic miracle," which rapidly industrialized the country and raised living standards, thereby bringing large numbers of former peasants without Marxist traditions into the working class and creating expectations of continued rapid improvements in living standards—the Party's handling of these problems was conditioned by the previous factors; the failure to collectivize agriculture and the futile policy of attempting to consolidate legitimacy among the peasant small holders, which resulted in both inefficient agriculture and a huge drain on economic resources that required turning to Western banks for loans; the "second generation effect"—those who grow up in relatively poorer socialist countries tend to look more to the West, and less to their prerevolutionary past to evaluate their life-styles, than do their parents; and the resistance of the leaders of the Polish Communist Party to allowing the people to learn from experience, especially about workers' self-management, instead substituting technological expertise and high rates of economic growth for the popular learning that the Cuban, Chinese, and Yugoslavs experienced. While some of Poland's problems are common to all socialist countries, others are particular to Poland. However, the constellation of forces that came together in Poland is unique.

In the 1920s and 1930s the Polish Communist Party was just about as strong as in any country outside of the USSR and Germany. Its support was in fact comparable with that of the French, Greek, Yugoslav, Italian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, and even Czech parties of the same period. Further, the Polish working class has strong Marxist traditions comparable with those of virtually any other working class of continental Europe. However, in good part because the Party was dissolved (and its members disorganized) in 1938, it was very slow in organizing resistance to the Nazi occupation—in most countries the combat-oriented Communist Party organization became the leading force in the resistance, winning considerable popular authority in the process, in Italy, Greece, France, Belgium, Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia. The weakness of the Party at the beginning of the occupation period, together with the strong motivation of the Polish middle class to organize resistance—there was a virtually genocidal Nazi policy directed against them, so there was little role in Poland for collaborators, as there was in most other countries occupied by the Nazis—meant that the resistance and the authority incumbent on that role fell principally to the Polish Home Army (A.K.).



The Party's prestige and authority, however, rose rapidly in 1944–45 as the Soviet Army liberated Poland, and the Party took leadership of the revolutionary process let loose by the Nazi retreat and allowed to blossom by the protection of the Red Army. The Party and the left-wing Socialists quickly recruited hundreds of thousands, together gaining the overwhelming support of the Polish working class as well as considerable support from other sectors of the population. But support so easily won did not run as deep as support won by Party leadership through years of hard struggle—as, for example, in Yugoslavia, China, and Vietnam. Socialist revolution came perhaps too easily to Poland, and as a result its advances have not been as appreciated as elsewhere. The revolutionary process that occurred in Polish society from 1944 to 1948 was organic to the logic of societies like Poland's, and has been repeated with minor variations many times, in Eastern Europe at the same time and elsewhere at other times. It was not imposed by the Soviet Union.

The onset of the cold war in 1947–49 resulted in the cutting off of Eastern Europe from economic assistance from, as well as most trade with, the West. It forced Poland to rapidly tighten up under imminent threat of invasion from the West. This implied both the necessity for rapid industrialization, in order to secure the base for both defense and self-reliant development, and the need to mobilize public opinion through the coordination of intellectual life at a pace not justified by the internal logic of the Polish revolutionary process. The U.S. monopoly of the atom bomb, the establishment of a peacetime draft for the first time in U.S. history, U.S. sponsorship of a united Germany, the outbreak of the Korean War in 1951, the formation of NATO in 1949, the rhetoric of "rolling back Communism," and the support for counterrevolutionaries in Eastern Europe all looked extremely ominous to Warsaw.

On the one hand, this meant that the Polish Party had to dig in its heels, consolidate socialist institutions, and increase production at a more rapid pace than would have otherwise occurred; on the other hand, it meant that the CIA and other Western intelligence agencies, together with right-wing Polish exiles, would attempt to disrupt the building of Polish socialism. At the same time the atmosphere of paranoia that was induced in the relatively weak socialist camp—which did not have the atom bomb until 1949—resulted in excessively repressive measures from the top down—sometimes taken against innocent people and loyal Communists, sometimes because of the disruptive instigation of the CIA (see Stewart, 1974). Such



"war measures" resulted in the alienation of many Poles who did not comprehend through direct experience the dangers of U.S. imperialism. Large numbers of Poles had relatives in the United States and had never been directly oppressed by U.S.-based institutions. Germany, Austria, and Russia were the traditional national enemies, while the United States had supported Polish independence in 1918 and fought with the Poles and Soviets against the Germans in World War II.

The rapid industrialization policy of the post-1947 period, with its emphasis on increasing productivity and dampening consumption so as to maximize accumulation and rationally allocate resources through central planning (essentially following the Soviet model), was implemented without really convincing the majority of the people of the necessity of the process. Even though this policy produced substantial results, it left a negative legacy with many workers. The dampening of the revolutionary enthusiasm of 1944-47 led the Party increasingly to resort to "top-down" bureaucratic and manipulative methods, rather than to trust the working class to learn from its own experiences, a luxury that probably was not possible in the 1948-55 world. The time bomb that was to explode in 1980 and 1981 began ticking in 1948.

A pattern of simmering working-class discontent with working conditions and insufficiently rising living standards occasionally exploding into spontaneous riots and strikes, which demanded both improvements in real wages and workers' direct control of production, developed. The typical response of the Party became concessions, followed by the undermining of the reforms—for the sake of economic efficiency and rapid economic growth—once the political situation again stabilized. The Party's pattern of concession in the face of militant demonstrations, followed by a gradual restoration of the old ways, produced a growing cynicism about the Party's integrity, and thus a general undermining of its authority.

The problem of the relative weakness of the Party's influence in Polish society (due to its weak 1938-43 role) was aggravated by the extremely rapid movement of peasants into the working class (a corollary of extremely rapid industrialization). These former peasants were largely motivated by the desire for consumption goods, and carried their traditional rural Catholicism with them into the working class. This was especially true in the Baltic and Silesian regions vacated by the fleeing Germans, where a very high percentage of the working class was made up of younger displaced peasants having lit-



tle continuity with the pre-World War II working class's Marxist traditions. It was not by chance that the 1970 riots took place in the Baltic region, and that Solidarity's strongest working-class base in 1981 proved to be the formerly German regions (including Gdansk, which had been the predominantly German Free City of Danzig before the war).

To quote a Polish social scientist, "The overwhelming majority of contemporary Polish workers entered professional life with no knowledge of the past and the struggle of the workers for their own class interest" (cited in Matejko, 1974:111). Young, former peasant workers were also concentrated in the new gigantic factories. A 1959 study found that in the new factories only about 20 percent of workers had been employed as workers before the war—this was true of 35 percent of workers in the old factories. About 30 percent of workers in the new factories were first-generation migrants from the countryside, and in some of the new factories as many as 50 percent of workers were under 28 years of age (Lane and Kolankiewicz, 1973:113).

Both the Catholicism and the chauvinistic traditions of the Polish intelligentsia were exceptionally strong because of the 120 years of Polish domination by the Orthodox Russians, who were regarded as inferior by the Polish aristocracy, whose influence permeated both the Church hierarchy and the intelligentsia in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The relative weakness of the Party before World War II led it to work out compromises with both the Church and the intelligentsia, rather than thoroughly root out reactionary influences in both (as occurred in most other socialist countries). The availability of alternative (and essentially anti-Communist and reactionary) ideological centers that began to assert themselves after 1956 meant that spontaneous popular discontent could be interpreted by anti-Communist, anti-Russian, conservative Catholic, and national chauvinist intellectuals, and could be channeled against both the Party and the socialist institutions whose construction it led.

Poland's failure to collectivize agriculture has proved to be a serious problem. While Poland created a modern industrial economy, its agriculture remained based on very small, inefficient peasant plots that almost exclusively utilized preindustrial technology. Instead of pressing for collectivization through offering significant economic incentives to collectives and making it difficult for individual farmers to survive economically, since 1956 the Polish state has made

concession after concession to the individual peasants. The most important of these has been to heavily subsidize the prices of their products at a level considerably higher than they could get in a free market. Reliance on horse technology, rather than on the high-technology methods developed in the West and increasingly applied successfully in other socialist countries, has proved to be a major and growing drain on economic resources, as well as a block to continued Polish economic development. The failure to follow the lead of the other socialist countries in developing a modern agricultural sector meant that Poland in the 1970s had to resort to Western banks, much more than it otherwise would have had to, in order to finance its continuing rapid economic growth. The compromise with the peasantry in 1956, like the compromise with the Church and with the non-Party, Western-oriented intellectuals, while in the short run stabilizing the political situation, in the long run proved to be another time bomb. The problem with Poland was not too much socialism, but not enough.

Poland has had an exceptionally rapid rate of growth. In 1960-79 its average annual rate of growth, in GNP per capita, of 5.2 percent was among the highest in either the socialist or the nonsocialist world. Its rate of growth in GDP in 1970-79 was 6.1 percent, higher than that of any developed capitalist or socialist country except Bulgaria (see World Bank, 1981: tables 1, 2). In the latter period it was even higher than Japan's 5.2 percent, the highest for any advanced capitalist country. Its rate of growth accelerated considerably over the 1960s rate, when it stood at 4.3 percent. This rapid rate of growth was manifested in a radical improvement in living standards. It was state and Party policy to rapidly increase living standards in order to meet the demands of the young and heavily former peasant working class, so as to legitimate itself to that class and avoid crises of confidence in the Party's leadership such as occurred in 1956 and 1970. The Party's authority thus, in good part, became dependent on a continuance of rapid economic improvement rather than deep ideological commitments among the majority of the younger population, such as is the case in Cuba, Bulgaria, Vietnam, and the USSR.

The long-term trend of a rapid increase in living standards further created the expectation of a continual future increase in living standards. Unlike their parents, the younger generation of workers, who have no direct memory of the miserable conditions of interwar Poland or of the horrors of life during the occupation, take the bene-



fits of socialism for granted. The younger generation expects as its birthright a continuing improvement in its lives, and can get quite angry when it does not occur. To quote a leading Polish expert:

Starting in the late 1950's, several values very attractive to the old generation were no longer exciting to their offspring. What would be considered a real achievement by people deprived in the past of social facilities was taken for granted. . . . The younger generation of blue-collar workers takes for granted improvements in economic and health conditions achieved by the older generation. Its sociocultural aspirations have been stimulated by the rapid development of the mass media. . . . The expectations of younger blue-collar workers are growing even faster than the effective progress in technology, the improved organization of work, knowledge, and the social culture of people occupying supervisory positions, the average income level, the supply of material goods, and the real decrease of differences between blue-collar workers and the intelligentsia. (Matejko, 1974:109)

The Party's promises, together with the rapid improvement in living standards that occurred through 1978, created ever higher expectations of further improvements in living standards. A national survey taken in 1975 found that about 75 percent of respondents considered their incomes to be too limited to meet their pressing needs (Paul and Simon, 1981:30). The rapid fall in living standards after the economic collapse of 1979-80 became a source of considerable frustration among younger workers.

The last half of the 1970s witnessed a gradual rise in popular discontent with economic conditions. While in 1974 only 36 percent of the public described food supplies in the shops as poor, this figure rose to 48 percent in 1975 and to an average of 55 percent between 1976 and 1979. During the first six months of 1980 this figure stood at 57 percent, then suddenly rose to 78 percent in September. A similar rapid increase in those who considered the economic conditions of the country to be bad occurred during 1980. This figure rose from 46 percent in February 1980 to 65 percent in July, when the strikes and demonstrations over food prices first broke out, and to 86 percent in September (see Kurczewski, 1981:24).

The signing of the Gdansk agreement recognizing the independent trade unions produced a tremendous burst of optimism about improvements in living standards. While in July 1980 only 22 per-

cent of Poles expected an immediate improvement in living standards, by September 2, immediately after the accords were signed, this figure had risen to 70 percent. But by mid-September the percentage of optimists had declined to 59 percent, and stood at 47 percent at the beginning of December 1980 (Kurczewski, 1981:24).

Poland has had to deal with a phenomenon common to all socialist countries, a combination of a "second-generation effect" and a "revolution of rising expectations." A long-term improvement in conditions tends to create the expectation of a continuing improvement in conditions and, consequently, the extreme potential for an explosive political situation if expectations are not met. A generation of those who have grown up without the experience of unemployment, highly oppressive working conditions, poverty, lack of education, medical care, or cultural facilities takes the accomplishments of a revolution for granted. Instead of comparing their condition with that of their parents under the old order, they tend to compare themselves with a romanticized image of "the good life" (of the middle class) in the more prosperous West. When the imagination of the younger generation of workers is not captured by Marxist ideals, younger workers at best become depoliticized and materialistically oriented, and at worse adopt reactionary ideologies (if they are available).

Faced with the failure of the younger generation to become enthusiastic about Marxist goals, the Polish Party dealt with the legitimation problem by increasingly resorting to rapid economic growth and a rapid rise in living standards as the way to maintain its authority. Virtually everything was subordinated to this goal. Compromises were increasingly made with the Church and non-Party intellectuals, allowing both to strengthen themselves as alternative ideological centers. Western banks were resorted to, to finance the extremely rapid economic growth of 1970-78, even though this resulted in the subordination of the Polish economy. The goal of collectivizing agriculture, an imperative of creating a modern efficient economy, was foresworn in order to appease the peasants. Workers' participation in the management of enterprises was resisted and undermined, on the ground that it was not as efficient as central planning and administration by experts—technically true, but politically dangerous, since it resulted in the alienation of younger workers rather than generating and encouraging their enthusiasm.

When, in 1978-80, the rapid pace of economic growth could no longer be maintained because the rising state subsidies to the peas-



ants and workers, which were consuming an ever higher proportion of the funds that should have been allocated to investment, could no longer be maintained, and the Western bankers would no longer allow the Polish debt to increase, the whole model collapsed. Not only did the Polish economy collapse but, because the Party and state relied so heavily on continued prosperity for legitimacy, an almost instantaneous political crisis was induced. The cutbacks in the heavy state subsidies to peasants and workers—forced by both the domestic imperative to generate accumulation funds and avoid shortages, and by the Western banks' insisting on the containment of what they saw as irrationalities in the allocation of resources—manifested in price increases in July 1980, greatly aggravated the previous two years of stagnation in living standards and produced a massive outpouring of discontent with the economic policies of the regime, as well as a profound political crisis. The spontaneous working-class protest against a decline in living standards, in the face of its expectations of a continued radical increase, is a classic example of what James Davies has referred to as the "J-Curve phenomenon"—the hypothesis that popular revolutions and upheavals occur when, after a long period of improvement in conditions, there is a sharp downturn that results in a sudden and large gap between expectations and reality (see Davies, 1962).

The conservative Church hierarchy and the anti-Communist dissident intellectuals then intervened, providing an interpretation of events as well as a strategy to the amorphous economic discontent of the workers. The Party, discredited by its failure to perform in the arena on which it had primarily based its authority, was in good measure ignored, as most young workers turned to the Church and to Social Democratic and nationalist intellectuals for direction. Seeing their opportunity, these latter groups rushed in, in an attempt to channel the workers' movement to overthrow the regime, destroy the Party's influence, and establish themselves as the leading force in Poland.

In the last instance the struggles in Poland must be understood as being overdetermined by the long-term conflict between two models of socialism—strong central planning, rapid industrialization, and strong party guidance versus strong workers' councils, decentralized decision making with reliance on markets, and pluralism among political organizations—and a long-term class struggle between the intelligentsia, which since 1956 has consistently fought for greater power and privileges for itself, even when opportunistically

offering leadership to discontented workers, and the working class, even when it has directed its anger at the economic policies of the Party, which has largely pursued the first model of socialist construction, and the world struggle between socialism and capitalism—the impact of the more affluent West on Polish society, especially the younger generation, was immense; the pressure on the USSR and all socialist countries by U.S. imperialism was even stronger. The special nature of the Polish crisis has been a result of the inability (for substantial historical reasons) of the Party to win and keep the enthusiastic support of the younger generation of workers, even while it has fairly consistently followed policies that are essentially in their long-term interests.

The solution to what has become a permanent crisis lies in developing the ability to win and hold the enthusiasm of the young by modifying the model of socialism pursued. The old adage of Rosa Luxemburg, the greatest Polish socialist of all, can be paraphrased: The working class demands the right to make its mistakes and learn in the dialectic of history. Let us speak plainly. The errors committed by an authentic workers' movement are more fruitful than the infallibility of the cleverest Central Committee.\*

But the most fundamental contradiction remains. Poland lies between the most concentrated and destructive imperialist arsenal assembled in the history of the world and the primary external support for the growth of national liberation and socialism. It therefore might be impossible for the world to "Let Poland be Poland."

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\*Her last sentence actually reads, "Historically, the errors committed by a truly revolutionary movement are infinitely more fruitful than the infallibility of the cleverest Central Committee" (Luxemburg, 1970:112).



## Epilogue: On Intervention (With Special Reference to Afghanistan)

In this epilogue I will attempt to examine systematically the effects of the intervention of one socialist country in another within the framework of a general theory of intervention. The nonmoralistic approach of Marxism is employed to examine the effects of intervention in terms of who benefits, and whether or not the long-term results are progressive (and popular). It is essential to tackle these questions with historical- and class-specific criteria of evaluation, as well as with a factually informed historical understanding of the causes and effects of other (socialist and nonsocialist) interventions throughout history.

Before developing the specifics of the argument and applying them to Poland (or to Hungary or Czechoslovakia), it is necessary to devote some space to the nature of the Afghan Revolution of April 1978 and the consequent social crisis in that country that led to Soviet intervention on the side of the revolutionary government in December 1979. Thus, the discussion of the effects of intervention will be informed by the Polish and Afghan examples (the two most widely debated cases in the early 1980s) and will conclude with a specific evaluation of Soviet intervention in these two cases.

### Afghanistan

Afghanistan is one of the poorest and most backward countries in the world. In the 1975-78 period, only 12 percent of adults were literate; only 33 percent of males and 6 percent of females of primary school age were in school; life expectancy was 42 years; and infant mortality was 237 per 1,000 (the highest of any country reported) (World Bank, *World Development Report*, 1980). There was one

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The section on Afghanistan relies heavily on the following: Bradsher, 1983; Du Pree, 1979; Halliday, 1978, 1980; Male, 1982; *Merit Reports: Afghanistan*, July-August 1980; and Smith et al., 1969.

doctor per 20,000 population, and most of these were in the capital city (most people never saw a doctor). GNP per capita was \$240 a year. Only 15 percent of the population lived in cities, and another 15 percent were still nomadic. The remaining 70 percent primarily lived in a variety of semifeudal relationships on the land (only 12 percent of the countryside is arable). There are no railroads in the country, nor are there any navigable rivers. Half the population suffered from tuberculosis, a quarter from malaria, half the population has intestinal problems, in some areas 75 percent suffered from trachoma. Forty percent of landholders held half a hectare or less. About 1 percent of the total employed population was employed in industry (two-thirds of these in textiles and food processing). The top 6 percent of urban households earned 40 percent of total income, while the bottom 56 percent earned 15 percent. The official unemployment rate was 20 percent. As many as 1 million men migrated abroad to seek work after the drought of the early 1970s (mostly to Iran and the Persian Gulf states). The industrial working class was miniscule and mostly located in the capital city, Kabul. The first trade union in the country was not formed until May 1978 (at a Kabul textile mill).

Feudalist/tribalist relationships and attitudes have generally prevailed in the countryside (they also spill over to employee-employer relationships in the urban areas). Tribal and ethnic identifications, social status, kinship, personal loyalties, obligations of honor, and vengeance are strong. Only about half of the arable land was under cultivation, and only about half of this was left uncultivated in any given year (in part because many larger landowners did not plant land they did not need the product of). Small holding prevailed (because of the Islamic practice of equal inheritance among sons). But still in 1978, 45 percent of the arable land was in the hands of 5 percent of the landholders.

There is little identification with an Afghan nation among the different ethnic and tribal groups in the country. Loyalty to family, tribe, or village is, to quote the *U.S. Army Area Handbook* for the country, "of far greater intensity and immediacy than to any concept of a nation. The valley, mountain, or plain where he lives or camps is his 'country,' and his immediate neighbors, most of whom are relatives, compose his 'nation' " (Smith et al., 1969:240). The major ethnic groups in Afghanistan are: the Pushtuns, who make up over half



the total population; a Turkish-speaking (Pushto) group divided between Pakistan and Afghanistan from which the old royal family and ruling class came; and the Tajiks, a Persian-speaking (Dari) group that has traditionally been dominant in commerce (and that predominates in the Kabul area). Ethnic identification is generally more important for the relatively urbanized Tajiks, while tribal identification is of more importance to the more rural Pushtuns. Uzbeks, Hazaras, Chahar Aimaks, and Turkomen are also important groups. It should be noted that the Tajik, Turkomen, and Uzbek people overlap with the Soviet Union (each of these groups has its own Soviet republic, where living standards and economic conditions are today qualitatively higher) (see A. Szymanski, 1984:ch. 2).

A common tenancy arrangement in the country was to share the product of the land by fifths, according to who provided the land, the water, the seed, the animals, and the labor. Thus, if landlords provided the land, water, seed, and animals they received 80 percent of the crop. But if peasants had their own materials, the tenants would receive 60 percent. Both small holders and tenants were heavily dependent on the credit system where annual interest rates were often approximately 50 percent (local merchants, moneylenders, and landlords were the source of the necessary agricultural credit). The usurious debt system impoverished many peasants while tending to concentrate the land (this process was aggravated after the drought of 1971-72).

The idea of an Afghan nation to which primary loyalty is owned, as well as a consciousness and understanding of the poverty and backwardness of the country, has been largely limited to the educated urban middle class who are overwhelmingly state employees (primarily teachers, civil servants, and military officers). High school and university education, the prerogative of the small urban elite, proved to be the source of discontent as Afghan youth learned about the world and developed an idea of the backwardness and suffering of the common people in their country.

Higher education began in 1932 with the establishment of a medical faculty. The first (and still only real) university was set up in Kabul in 1946. Between 1946 and 1959 Kabul University graduated slightly over 1,000 students. In 1966 enrollment was 3,300. In 1976 roughly 1 percent of the 20-24 year old population was enrolled in higher education in Afghanistan or abroad. Another 17,000 students

were in Kabul high schools, a great many of these were from the provinces and, hence, many of them lived in boarding houses. Remote from their families, they were also receptive to radicalization. It was among such students that Marxism first developed in Afghanistan.

In 1965 the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) was formed—the first Marxist organization in the country's history. Its newspaper, *Khalq*, was sold mostly to students and had a press run of about 10,000. The declared aim of *Khalq* (The Masses) was to "alleviate the boundless agonies of the oppressed peoples of Afghanistan." It invoked the traditions of "the Great October Revolution" and emphasized the need for land reform and a predominant role for state in the economy.

The PDPA analysis of the country and its strategy was close to that of the mainstream communist parties of the 1960s. It argued that Afghanistan was ruled by large landowners, wealthy merchants, compradors, and state bureaucrats in collaboration with foreign imperialism. It advocated a national democratic government representing workers, peasants, progressive intellectuals, artisans, smallholders, and the national bourgeoisie to liberate Afghanistan from its backwardness. Among its demands were: universal compulsory primary education in each child's native language; the development of each of the different languages and cultures of the country (only Dari and Pushto were official languages); equality for women (women's lot was especially oppressive); a ban on child labor; the right to a job; and sickness and maternity paid leave.

Important in the early history of the PDPA was the largest strike wave in Afghanistan's history. In April and June 1968, 21 separate strikes were reported in a number of towns (in construction, transport, textile factories, cement and petroleum plants, and gold mines). There were a dozen student strikes at the same time as students attempted to link up with the spontaneous working-class movement. It should be noted that at this time only about 80,000 workers were employed in construction and industry combined.

The membership of the PDPA at the beginning of 1978 was officially claimed to be 50,000, while most independent evaluations put the figure at 3,000 to 10,000. Almost all of these members were located in urban areas. The Party was very heavily middle class in composition, with disproportionate strength in the army and among students and teachers.



Within a year of the founding of the PDPA, the new Party began to be torn apart in a factional battle between the "hard liners" who came to be referred to by the name of the first Party paper, *Khalq*, and the moderates who came to be identified with the paper they put out after the suppression of *Khalq—Parcham* (The Flag). The differences between these two factions festered until July 1967, when the Parcham faction, led by Babrak Karmal, and a majority of the members of the founding central committee left the organization. The Khalq faction, which had a slight majority before Parcham left, led by Nur Mohammed Taraki (Hafizullah Amin was also in this faction), disappeared from public view for a while after the split, allowing the Parcham faction, which also claimed to be the only legitimate PDPA, to gain credibility, largely accomplished through the publication of its newspaper, *Parcham*.

The principal differences between the Khalq and Parcham factions concerned the nature of the revolutionary coalition in Afghan society. The Khalq faction wanted to build a working-class party "of the Leninist type," which was to share a minimum of power with anyone else, with emphasis given to workers themselves building socialism. On the other hand, Parcham wanted to build a broad national democratic coalition, including "patriotic" and non-Marxist forces, to carry through the first phase of the revolution.

A secondary issue dividing the two factions was the emphasis given to the national question. Khalq tended to emphasize more the domestic nationalities question, while Parcham emphasized more the issue of Pushtunistan, part of which had been incorporated into Pakistan by the British. Parcham accused Khalq of making unwarranted concessions to nationalism, while Khalq suggested that Parcham was pro-Pushtun (most of Parcham's leaders were Pushtun) as well as opportunistic.

Khalq was publicly critical of both the Tudeh Party in Iran, for calling for a broad popular alliance against the Shah, and the National Awami Party (NAP) in Pakistan, which had been allied for a time with Bhutto. Parcham, on the other hand, had close relations with both the NAP and the Tudeh, with whose strategies it concurred. Karmal was elected to the national parliament, which he very effectively used as a platform for Parcham's ideas. Both factions consistently appeared to be equally pro-Soviet, each making claims that their policies were more orthodox than the other's. The Soviets by all indications kept good relations with both groups.

Before 1973 Parcham gave emphasis to "working from within," which included recruiting among the officer corp of the army. Meanwhile, Khalq gave more emphasis to "working among the masses."

In 1971 and 1972 a drought accelerated the impoverishment of the peasantry, as many small holders already in debt found it impossible to meet their usurious interest payments and thus were reduced to landless laborers. Others found their resources greatly reduced. Meanwhile, the money lenders (who were usually also the bigger landowners and the merchants) accumulated considerable resources, a consequence of their interest rates, which often reached 50 percent. In the face of this growing crisis in Afghan society, Parcham began working with Muhammed Daud, a cousin of the king, to overthrow the ruling Mohammadzai regime and implement wide-ranging "democratic" reforms. Organizing was focused on the officer corps, which tended to have considerable nationalist, as well as Marxist, sympathies (most young officers had been trained in the Soviet Union). In July 1973 the armed forces took over, and Daud became prime minister. Some Parcham supporters were appointed to the new Revolutionary Council, and others became ministers in the new government. As a junior partner, Parcham mobilized its cadre to help implement the new regime's promises of reform. Many young enthusiasts of Parcham were thus sent into the countryside.

However, Daud actually did very little to implement the promised reforms. By 1975 Daud's failure became obvious to most Parcham members. Many, including a considerable number of junior army officers, consequently defected to Khalq (which had staunchly opposed working with Daud from the beginning on the grounds that only Daud would benefit from collaboration). Khalq, giving up its earlier reluctance to organize within the officer corps, soon came to have stronger support there than did Parcham. (Amin, assigned to work in the army, built up a strong Khalq faction among officers.) Many of those sent to the provinces without effect in 1973 also changed their allegiance to the Khalq faction out of their frustration with the Daud regime and Parcham's futile collaboration with it. By the end of 1975 Parcham's leaders themselves gave up hope of influencing Daud and thus moved closer to Khalq's politics.

In 1977 Daud gave up most of the pretense of being a reformer, reverting to the behavior of his predecessors, appointing friends and relatives to top positions, while pushing progressives out of the government. Daud had gotten closer and closer to the Shah of Iran. As



early as the fall of 1974, the Shah hinted that up to \$2 billion in aid might be forthcoming. In the spring of 1975, when Daud visited Tehran, the Shah agreed to a \$400 million loan on easy terms. Meanwhile, Daud's foreign policy moved away from progressive non-alignment to an increasingly pro-Iranian and pro-Western position. Savak, the Shah's secret police, began operating in Afghanistan. In early 1978 the Iranians apparently convinced Daud to undertake a thorough purge of leftists from both the army and the civil service.

Meanwhile, in July 1977, in the face of growing disillusionment with the Daud regime, the two factions of the PDPA once again merged. The Khalq faction, strengthened by the apparent verification of its line in the face of Daud's failure, now had the majority of members. The ratio of Khalq to Parcham supporters in the PDPA was now roughly two to one. However, there were five Parchamites and six Khalq supporters on the new central committee. This reunification only occurred after two years of negotiations with the mediation of a veteran Pakistani Communist and apparently with strong Soviet encouragement. Both personal animosities and political differences remained salient, however, while factional identification and organization remained important. But the bulk of the Afghan left was now united. Indeed, it represented a formidable force, especially given its social base in the state apparatus and army.

On April 18, 1978, the police killed Mir Akbar Khyber, a university professor who was former editor of *Parcham* and one of the most popular members of the PDPA. In response to the killing, there was a funeral demonstration of between 15,000 and 30,000 supporters outraged by his death. This was the largest demonstration in Afghan history. Worried about the popular outpouring of support for the PDPA, Daud ordered mass arrests and purges of PDPA leaders and supporters. However, before all the arrests of PDPA leaders could be implemented, instructions went out to PDPA supporters in the army to attempt to overthrow the Daud government. This was accomplished in one day, April 26, and the top PDPA leaders were released. The military commanders, whose action had met only scattered armed resistance (which was soon put down, with perhaps a few hundred dead, including Daud himself), immediately turned political power over to the leaders of the PDPA. A 35-member Revolutionary Council with *all* members from the PDPA was set up to govern (Khalq had the majority). Some progressive nationalists, liberals, and religious leaders were, however, brought into the new cabinet,

while others worked with the regime as advisors. Taraki became premier and Karmal vice-premier.

It should be emphasized that the PDPA had no advanced plan to take power, nor did the Soviet Union have advanced information that a seizure of power was to occur. The seizure was hastily organized in the face of the immediate threat of the decimation of both the PDPA leadership and its leading supporters in the military. The alternatives were to act when it did or be jailed or worse. Likewise, the PDPA seizure of power was precipitated by actions of the Shah of Iran who was pressuring Daud to purge and repress the Afghan left. Virtually all observers agree that the Saur Revolution, as the April 26 seizure of power has been called, was initially quite popular, especially in Kabul, since there was considerable disillusionment with the Daud regime, which had frustrated the hopes of those who had expected him to carry through a program of fundamental reforms.

The revolutionary regime soon began to announce fundamental measures, including: (1) the cancellation of the debt of poor peasants; (2) the redistribution of land to the landless; (3) the equalization of women's status; (4) a low ceiling on the price of brides; (5) a mass literacy campaign in which both men and women were to learn to read and write; (6) the use of all languages in the media; (7) state assumption of at least 51 percent ownership of major enterprises; and (8) limitations on foreign ownership of the economy.

Mortgages and loans contracted before March 1974 were cancelled on the assumption that interest payments had already more than repaid the original loans. Latter debts of the landless were also cancelled, while the recent debts of small holders were assigned an easy scale of repayment. It was claimed that about 11 million peasants benefited from this reform.

The land reform decree announced in November 1978 put a limit of 15 acres on prime irrigated land. This involved the redistribution of half the land in the country to families designated as "deserving"—those with five acres or less (who made up about 80 percent of the rural population). The control and allocation of water were very important and mostly controlled by the wealthy in the villages. The agrarian reform measure nationalized the irrigation works and put them under the control of the Ministry of Water and Power and the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reforms. The decree also stated that the Agricultural Development Bank would provide rural credit to replace the role of bazaar moneylenders, mer-



chants, and wealthy landlords (poor peasants could not work the land without credit.)

The liberation of women became a major emphasis of the Saur Revolution. Primary emphasis on this front focused on greatly limiting the role of bride price and to making women literate. The revolution's Marriage Law Decree placed a severe restriction on the amount that a groom's family could provide in bride price (roughly \$10), made the age of consent for girls 16, and made consent necessary for both parties (marriages had traditionally been arranged, often without the consent of the parties involved.) Students from the cities went to the countryside to organize literacy classes for both men and women, as well as to assist in the land reform.

The revolutionary regime pledged "essential conditions for evolution of the literature, education and publication in mother tongues of tribes and nationalities resident in Afghanistan." Radio Kabul began broadcasting in all the principal languages of the country (no longer just in Dari and Pushto). The mass literacy campaign was begun (in all the languages of the country, with emphasis given to printing textbooks in the various languages as well). Commitments were made to begin publication of newspapers and periodicals in the various languages, and the compulsory teaching of Pushto was abolished.

A number of more symbolic reforms were also implemented. Luncheon and food ration allowances for all state employees were equalized. Communal eating for officers and enlisted men in the army was instituted. The national flag was changed to red with a gold emblem (which symbolized the state's new commitments to "Food, Clothing and Shelter").

The attempt to implement these reforms, especially those that affected the status of women, ran into considerable resistance in the countryside. The idealism of the PDPA leadership and cadre led to a head-on collision with the popular prejudices stirred up by the rural mullahs who often were among the wealthiest people in the villages (with the most to lose from the various reforms). Opposition was primarily mobilized against the campaign to change the status of women. Traditional peasants found the attempt of the school teachers sent down from the cities to initiate literacy classes with both men and women especially offensive. Afghan male honor was offended. Not only did this violate the Islamic tradition of separating men from women, but it undermined the traditional role of women.

Moreover, the content of the literacy classes was often judged by the conservative mullahs as offensive and atheistic. The mullahs' traditional prerogatives as teachers and administrators of Islamic law, as well as their property interests, were threatened by the literacy workers and the new revolutionary government they represented. Previous regimes had given the mullahs veto power over what would be taught in the schools. Before long, school teachers were being tortured and killed as infidels, and the newly constructed schools burned. Government attempts to punish the murderers resulted in an escalation of hostilities.

Local mullahs often convinced the peasants that cooperation with the "infidel government" was a sin and resistance an obligation for pious Muslims. Tribal leaders used tribal and kin loyalties to the same effect. Peasants were often told that to accept the cancellation of debt or the redistributed land was theft and thus against Islamic law. In some areas peasants who planted crops on their new land or otherwise cooperated with the government had their houses burned down and their crops destroyed or their ears cut off as a warning to others.

Reactionary bands inspired by conservative and often wealthy mullahs and tribal leaders began torturing and killing suspected PDPA members and supporters on sight. The decree on bride price was strongly opposed as well as ineffective, since even most young women opposed it, feeling degraded by having such a low price associated with themselves (as well as having no one to turn to in the event of violations). The land and debt reforms, however, have been much more popular, and in many areas were carried through.

The response of the PDPA cadre was often to respond to peasant resistance by making peasants attend literacy classes, using pressure and even force rather than persuasion. Government retaliation for the killing and torturing of cadre, including executions and preemptive mass arrests, only extended the rebellions.

There are about a quarter of a million mullahs in Afghanistan. They have had a long history of opposing reforms, which, throughout the twentieth century, they have been quick to label as atheistic (for example, Shah Amanullah's mild reforms of the 1920s were so labeled). The regime appears to have missed the opportunity to effectively portray itself as Islamic (for example, by not sufficiently emphasizing who it was who was opposing usury and who was supporting it). Primarily, the regime contented itself with asserting that



it was not anti-Islamic. Thus, the Islamic issue was left to the counterrevolution (which was opposed to any change in the land or debt system).

Serious problems also developed with the debt and land reforms. Peasants who had been given land, even when they resisted reactionary pressure not to accept it, often were unable to cultivate the land for lack of credit to purchase seed, instruments, and animals. The Agricultural Development Bank was unable to provide sufficient credit. Thus, the ability to provide the peasants with seed, water, and implements to work the land was lacking. Redistribution was also often managed in a commanding manner insensitive to the traditional sentiments of the peasants. In many places farmers proved unwilling to plant or market the product of redistributed land because of uncertainty of ownership, social pressure, and threats of violence. Some debtors who refused to pay their creditors were killed.

### **Afghanistan's Relations with the Soviet Union**

Afghanistan and the Soviet Union have a long history of friendly and cooperative relations. This, in good part, explains the pro-Soviet attitudes of a large segment of the officer corps and intellectuals. Afghanistan was the first country to recognize Lenin's new revolutionary government. In September 1920 the Soviet revolutionary government signed a friendship treaty with the fairly progressive emir of Afghanistan (Amanullah). In 1931 a treaty of neutrality and mutual nonaggression was signed between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, which was renewed in 1955 and 1965. It was newly independent Afghanistan's first foreign treaty (as a British protectorate, the United Kingdom had been handling its foreign affairs). Mutual hostility to Britain motivated this early treaty, which stipulated that the Soviets supply military equipment and technical aid to Afghans in their struggle against the British (this was the first Soviet foreign assistance program).

In the post-World War II period, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union once again were drawn together by their mutual enemies—this time Pakistan and its SEATO and CENTO Western allies. When Pakistan became independent in 1947, the Afghan government demanded that British-occupied Pustunistan be reunited with the rest of Afghanistan or made an independent country rather than made

part of Pakistan. The United Kingdom and Pakistan refused. As a result Afghanistan refused to recognize the new Pakistani government and opposed its admission into the United Nations. Escalating hostility between the two countries resulted in Pakistan taking a series of measures to restrict and finally cut off landlocked Afghanistan's trade through its territory. In 1954 Pakistan joined SEATO and signed a mutual defense assistance agreement with the United States. In 1955, after Pakistan once again closed its border to Afghan trade, the Soviet Union signed a treaty stipulating duty-free transit privileges for Afghanistan through the Soviet Union, as well as providing for massive economic assistance. Since 1955 Afghanistan has relied heavily on the Soviet Union for both trade and most economic assistance. In the 1960s about 55 percent of Afghan trade was with the Soviet Union, compared to 10 percent in 1950. By the end of 1966 Afghanistan had received the equivalent of about \$600 million in grants and loans from Moscow.

It should be noted that in early 1956 Pakistan's SEATO allies expressed support for its position on the Pustunistan question. This should be seen in combination with the refusal of Washington to provide military assistance unless Afghanistan joined the Bagdad Pact (CENTO). Afghanistan consolidated its relations with the Soviet Union by signing a military assistance agreement with Moscow in the summer of 1956. Since then the Soviets have provided the Afghans with most of their modern arms. In addition, they have supplied military advisors and have trained large numbers of their officers in the Soviet Union. The Afghan military's technical language became Russian. With Soviet training, supplies, and advisors, the Afghan Army grew from 44,000 soldiers with antique weapons in 1956 to a moderately well-equipped army of 100,000. Not surprisingly, all this was instrumental in generating considerable pro-Soviet sentiments among a large segment of the officer corps.

The relationship that developed between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union since the mid-1950s is unique. China, Mongolia, and North Korea aside, no other developing country had such close economic and military ties with the Soviet Union (at least not until Cuba in the early 1960s and Vietnam in the 1970s). In fact, one U.S. State Department official described the relationship between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union as something between that of the Soviet Union and Mongolia and the Soviet Union and Finland. By 1979 the Soviets



had provided Afghanistan with approximately \$1,250 million in military aid and \$110 million in economic aid. It had trained almost 4,000 Afghan military personnel as well as almost 7,000 Afghan students in the Soviet Union.

Considering the Daud government to be progressive, the Soviets supported the regime from 1973 to its overthrow in April 1978. Of course, they had played no role in, nor had any advanced knowledge of, the quickly organized military-led revolution of April 1978. Once the revolutionary regime was in place, however, the Soviets provided increasing economic and military support. In December 1978 the new revolutionary regime signed a 21-year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviets.

As the reactionary Islamic and tribal opposition to the implementation of the regime's revolutionary program grew, the Soviets increased their support. However, they were reluctant to increase their assistance to the level called for by the Afghan regime because of what they considered to be the mistakenly sectarian and provocative policies of the increasingly aggressive Khalq faction, which had assumed sole leadership of the Revolutionary Council. The new regime allegedly made 14 separate requests for radically increased Soviet military assistance over the course of 1979 (which were all declined).

Immediately after the seizure of power, the old split between the Khalq and Parcham factions was rekindled, once again around the issue of the broad united front advocating limited and cautious implementation of a program of radical reforms versus "revolutionary," that is, Khalq, leadership promoting a rapid process of revolutionary change with a minimum of compromise and sharing in power. In spite of Soviet efforts to contain this renewed antagonism and promote moderation, the Parcham leaders were excluded from leadership positions in July 1978 and for the most part were sent abroad as ambassadors. At approximately the same time, progressive nationalist leaders who had supported the April Revolution were also purged from the cabinet and military staff. Deprived of essential allies, the popular support of the now exclusively Khalq-led Revolutionary Council began to decline. Furthermore, the two principal Khalq leaders, Taraki and Amin, soon began arguing about how best to preserve the situation, with Amin taking the more hardline, military approach. In March 1979 Taraki relinquished the post of prime minis-

ter to Amin. In July Amin also became defense minister and secretary of the PDPA. Taraki, however, remained in the key position of president of the Revolutionary Council.

The Soviets, now more actively than ever, attempted to mediate the growing rift within the Khalq faction, while at the same time advising moderation in the regime's policies so as to not further alienate the people. In September 1979 Taraki stopped off in Moscow on his way back from a nonaligned conference and received a particularly warm welcome. He apparently agreed to broaden the Afghan government, moderate its politics (return to the National Democratic Program, free most political prisoners), and reduce Amin's powers. Immediately on his return to Kabul, however, there was a violent clash between Taraki's and Amin's supporters in which Taraki was apparently killed (his death was announced in October). Amin was now elected president of the Revolutionary Council, succeeding Taraki. In October Amin announced some moderating concessions and the release of some political prisoners, but there was no basic change in his hardline policy.

In the fall of 1979 there were perhaps 5,000 Soviet advisors in Afghanistan, including probably about 3,000 to 4,000 advisors or technicians in the military. Finally on December 24, 1979, a major airlift of Soviet frontier guards to Kabul was undertaken (composed almost entirely of Uzbeks, Turkomen, and Tajiks from the Soviet side of the border, who share the same ethnicity as their cousins in Afghanistan). The airlift and the accompanying troop convoys intervened on the side of the Afghan Army, deploying in the major cities and on strategic transportation routes, rather than engaging in actively fighting the counterrevolutionaries. The exact details of the Soviet intervention remain obscure, but it is clear that the massive increase in Soviet support for the revolutionary government occurred in cooperation with a reassertion of the Parcham faction and on condition of the implementation of its moderate program. Barbrak Karmal, who returned from East European exile, now became president of the Revolutionary Council, and on December 27 Amin was killed.

Again the Parcham and Khalq factions were amalgamated under strong pressure from the Soviets, this time under Parcham's moderate line. Symbolic of the new approach was: the retirement of the all-red Afghan flag adopted in 1978 and its replacement by a flag similar to the old with nationalist and religious symbolism; the tak-



ing down of Lenin's portrait from public buildings and schools; and the avoidance of Marxist terminology.

The new government held numerous meetings with tribal and religious leaders, repeatedly pledging that the regime was not atheist and that it did not intend to implement communism. It released virtually all political prisoners, pledging itself to the "social development of society" in cooperation with broad segments of the people. In 1981 the largely aborted land reform movement of 1979 was reinvigorated as part of a general program to win support among the poor. Machine tractor stations were set up to provide services to new cooperatives. Large numbers of Afghan youth went to the Soviet Union for higher education and technical training, especially for civil service positions and the officer corps (in early 1981 there were over 10,000 Afghans training in the Soviet Union).

The Soviet troop deployment in Afghanistan was designed to secure the major towns and transportation routes, making it clear that the counterrevolution could not bring down the revolutionary government. The Afghan Army continued to do almost all of the ground fighting against counterrevolutionary bands, with the Soviets providing support services. To quote the *New York Times*:

Western diplomats here said serious fighting between insurgent and Afghan troops loyal to the Government was continuing in parts of the northeastern provinces close to the Soviet, Chinese and Pakistan borders, but that no Soviet troops were involved (January 11, 1980).

One Administration official said that information available to the United States indicated that the brunt of the fighting was between Afghan Army units and the rebels (January 12, 1980).

Military analysts believe that in addition to securing major towns and strategic roads in the country, the Soviet Army has begun to train and equip a new Afghan Army that would be more responsible to orders from the Karmal Government and Moscow (January 14, 1980).

Western diplomats and military experts here remained as puzzled over Moscow's ultimate military intentions as they were when the intervention in Afghanistan began more than a month ago. . . . Soviet ground forces have shown virtually no interest in combating the rebels according to both Asian and Western diplomats. Fighting has dropped off dramatically along the border

with Pakistan partly because of winter snows and partly because neither Afghan troops nor Soviet forces have moved very far from their encampments in towns and along major roads (January 17, 1980).

The counterrevolutionary movement in Afghanistan has occurred in the form of small bands using hit and run tactics. These bands act independently of each other and are based on the multitudinous tribal, ethnic, personality, and religious orientations, and to a lesser degree on political differences. It has been reported that there are between 40 and 160 separate insurgent groupings (*New York Times*, March 2, 1980). These groups are often quite hostile to each other, refusing to cooperate under any general leadership. Probably the largest opposition group is the Islamic Party of Afghanistan, which like most of the rest of the opposition wants to turn Afghanistan into a fundamentalist Islamic state governed by the injunctions of the Koran. Political opposition to the government often merges into protection for drug or other smuggling operations, and holding up buses, trucks, and convoys for the lucrative profits involved. Many tribal groups are more concerned about being left alone by *any* Kabul government than they are with transforming or protecting other parts of Afghanistan (see *New York Times*, March 2, 1980).

The Islamic Party of Afghanistan actively opposes modernization and has close ties to the Moslem Brotherhood in other countries of the Mideast. It has ties to Saudi Arabia and Khomeini's Iran and had been active in fighting leftist students on the streets of Kabul before the April 1978 revolution. Ultraconservative, its program includes reversing all reforms that have affected women; for example, the veil should once again be required.

Another major grouping, more pro-Western and somewhat less extremist in its fundamentalism, is the National Islamic Front, whose leader, Sayed Ahmed Gailani, is a member of an old landlord family. Other groupings include the Afghan National Liberation Front, headed by Sibghattula Mojdeddi, also of aristocratic background (and a traditionalist religious leader as well), and the Movement for the Islamic Revolution, led by Mohammed Nabi Mohammadi, a rival of Mojdeddi for the religious inheritance of a mullah who led opposition to King Amanullah's mild reforms in the 1920s (see Bradsher, 1983:219).



Most of these organizations have been based in the Pakistani city of Peshawar, just across the Afghan border, and have received active assistance from the Zia military dictatorship as well as arms and training from Saudi Arabia, Iran, China, and the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. All efforts to unify either these various Peshawar groupings or the actual tribal fighting bands in Afghanistan have failed.

Bradsher, whose book is most hostile to the Afghan revolution and sympathetic to U.S. efforts to oppose it, reports:

None of these or the several other *mujahideen* factions conformed to the pattern of typical late twentieth-century "national liberation front" programs in anything more than opposing foreign domination. The usual front sought popular support with promises of social reform and economic progress, even if this was only a ploy by cynical men who sought power without knowing how to implement their promises. The Afghan resistance was more personal than ideological. It was a bundle of often competing messages that emphasized religious, ethnic, and other deeply ingrained ties; that played on the traditional desire to avoid the domination of a centralized government in Kabul; and that preached hatred of Khalqi brutality, a rejection of Parchami subservience to foreigners, and a xenophobic outlook focused on Russians. It was in many ways a throwback to nineteenth-century resistance encountered by European colonial powers in their attempts to impose change on parts of Africa and Asia (Bradsher, 1983:219)

In fact, the Afghan counterrevolutionaries, or in the words of the U.S. State Department, "freedom fighters," were even more reactionary than their counterparts in the Sepoy mutiny in India in 1857 or the counterrevolutionaries in the Vendee during the French Revolution. Like these two classical reactionary movements, the Afghan counterrevolution has been led by very conservative traditional leaders, inspired by fundamentalist religion and opposed to all reforms. Moreover, the Afghan movement, inspired by reactionary Islam under the leadership of Afghan landlords usually doubling as mullahs, is especially vicious. The general policy of the "freedom fighters" has been to torture, kill, and mutilate the bodies of all supporters of the regime they can get a hold of. This treatment has been extended to the young school teachers, land form advisors, govern-

ment civil servants, as well as progressive military officers and soldiers who refuse to join their cause.

The very likely result of the victory of the Islamic counterrevolution in Afghanistan would be the slaughter of probably hundreds of thousands of leftists and progressive Western-oriented intellectuals who have worked with the revolutionary regime or supported fundamental reforms or liberalization. Kabul would in all probability look like Kampuchea and make El Salvador look like a picnic. In the resulting blood bath, Afghanistan would be set back 75 years, with all traces of progressive reforms wiped out along with the great many who would be exterminated. Women would once again be confined to the most vigorous seclusion in the world. The landlords and tribal chiefs protected by their reactionary interpretation of Islam would once again rule unchallenged.

The choice facing the Afghan Revolution and the Soviet Union in December 1979 was to risk the likely victory of the counterrevolution during the next year, or for the Soviets to intervene. The latter alternative would lead to strengthening the regime and insisting on the moderation of the policies that were feeding the counterrevolution and thus broadening the basis for reform and attempting to isolate the leading forces of reaction (increasingly armed by the Western powers, China, and Saudi Arabia through Pakistan). This choice, like that of April 1978, presented the moderate Afghan revolutionaries with a choice between two alternatives, each of which had considerable costs. But for those honestly concerned with transforming Afghanistan and who also have an understanding of the real historical possibilities, it is not difficult to understand why the two pivotal decisions were taken. It would be most difficult to argue that the possibilities of progress would have been advanced by the decision to accept imprisonment instead of revolution (in April 1978) or mass murder and a long Islamic night instead of active Soviet intervention in December 1979.

On both occasions the Afghan Revolution acted in the spirit (although not yet with the success) of Rosa Luxemburg's praise of Bolshevik audacity:

"... the Bolsheviks solved the famous problem of 'winning a majority of the people,' which has ever weighed on the German social democracy like a nightmare. As bred-in-the-bone disciples of parliamentary cretinism, these German social democrats have



sought to apply to revolutions the homemade wisdom of the parliamentary nursery: in order to carry anything you must first have a majority. The same, they say, applies to revolution: first let's become a "majority." The true dialectic of revolutions, however, stands this wisdom of parliamentary moles on its head: not through a majority to revolutionary tactics, but through revolutionary tactics to a majority—that is the way the road runs.

Only a party which knows how to lead, that is, to advance things, wins support in stormy times. The determination with which, at the decisive moment, Lenin and his comrades offered the only solution which could advance things ("all power in the hands of the proletariat and peasantry"), transformed them almost overnight from a persecuted, slandered, outlawed minority whose leader had to hide like Marat in cellars, into the absolute master of the situation (Luxemburg, 1918:374–75).

The outcome of the Afghan situation, then, in the long run depends not so much on the fact of Soviet support for the revolution, but whether or not the policies of the Afghan regime are progressive and reasonably applied over the long run. The example of the effective suppression of the similar "Basmachi" counterrevolution, which occurred just over the Afghan border in Soviet Central Asia in the 1920s, shows that it is possible for both rapid economic and cultural progress to occur in Afghanistan (as it has in Soviet Central Asia) and for strong support to develop for the revolutionary regime because of a radical improvement in the economic, social, and cultural conditions of the people (all this without offending the essential aspects of Islam) (see A. Szymanski, 1984:ch. 2).

### Criteria By Which to Evaluate Interventions

It is essential to use historical- and class-specific criteria of evaluation in any Marxist analysis of the effects of a phenomenon. Consequently, the absolutist framework of *for everyone for all time* must be avoided. What is good for one may be deadly for another. What is good at one time may not be at another time; that is, the framework of formal logic (either/or) must be rejected in favor of dialectic logic (events are class- and mode-of-production-specific). Specifically within today's world, things may have an opposite effect on workers than on capitalists, or on imperialist and dominated countries. In-

creased worker control of production may be good for workers and bad for capitalists, just as slavery was good for the masters and bad for the slaves. Likewise, a monopoly on atomic weapons was good for imperialism, but bad for the colonized people of the world. The ready availability of Soviet arms is good for national liberation movements, but bad for imperialism.

In addition to a class- and historically-specific analysis of effects, we must analyze whether or not the total effects of a phenomenon are progressive or not, given the specific mode of production within which it occurs. That is, does the sum of the effects of a phenomenon advance human freedom and the forces of production, or does it hold them back? For example, did Sherman's brutal march through Georgia (and, in general, Northern intervention and conquest of the South in 1861-65) advance the freedom of slaves and accelerate the growth of capitalism in the South? Did the revolutionary French army's invasion of Germany and Italy or Napoleon's incursion into Spain and Russia accelerate the development of (progressive) capitalism and the collapse of feudal vestiges?

The question of whether or not people who live in the countries where an intervention occurs eventually come to accept the consequences of an intervention or become more opposed to its effects must be subsumed under the broader question of progressiveness. That is, if intervention strengthens reaction in the long run, it is not progressive, but if it weakens reaction in the long run, no matter how unpopular in the short run, it is progressive. For example, there are few people in Georgia today who wish that their state were not a part of the Union, nor are there many in Italy, Germany, or Spain who long for authoritarian monarchy.

One does not normally evaluate either the French or American revolutions in terms of whether 51 percent or less of the people (in the United States, including Indians and slaves) supported them. One does not evaluate the military intervention of the French on the side of the United States in its revolution in terms of whether or not the rebels or loyalists had the majority. One does not evaluate Unionist intervention in the states of the old Confederacy in terms of whether or not the majority of Southerners supported Lincoln or Davis (or whether or not the majority of slaves actively sought their freedom). Similarly one normally condemns Nazism, especially its persecution of the Jews, independent of whether or not the majority of the German people supported Hitler. One normally judges these historically



momentous events in terms of whether or not one approves of their results (and for Marxists in terms of whether or not they were progressive in their effects). The question of progressiveness is thus the more fundamental one by which to evaluate the effects of intervention on a country, not the question of whether or not the majority supports an intervention in the short run (although, of course, the question of popular support is important, especially in the long run).

One must evaluate the effects of Cuban intervention in Angola and Ethiopia on the side of the progressive nationalist movement in 1975 and 1977 in terms similar to that applied to French support of the American Revolution. Cuban support clearly was progressive in allowing revolutionary nationalism to beat back the South African-supported invasion, as well as for the left-moving Ethiopian regime to consolidate itself. The radical reforms and nationalist policies of both regimes were designed to advance both the modernization of their backward countries and to promote the real freedom of the common people qualitatively more than had been possible with the preceding and possibly alternative regimes. Moreover, such interventions were widely welcomed by at least a large proportion of the people in both countries. If one supports such progressive transformations and opposes Haile Selassie and Zaire-type regimes in Africa, it would be difficult to oppose the Cuban interventions (given their effects).

Cuban intervention in these two African countries (as well as French intervention in the American Revolution) is similar to Soviet intervention on the side of the Spanish Republic during its Civil War (1936-39) as well as the People's Republic of China's intervention in Korea in 1950. In both cases the forces of reaction, assisted by massive support from the most aggressive imperialist powers of the day, Germany and Italy in the 1930s and the United States in the 1950s, were winning civil wars. For example, in Angola in 1975 the UNITA-South Africa-CIA coalition was about to take Luanda when the Cubans intervened. In Spain Soviet equipment and advisors gave substantial help to a popular and progressive struggle. Likewise, in Korea a million Chinese died repelling the U.S./ROK armies south of the thirty-eighth parallel. In both cases those who support socialism and oppose reaction and imperialism would positively evaluate these interventions, while, of course, those who supported Franco's victory in Spain and a U.S. client-state in all of Korea would oppose them.

This is also true of Chinese intervention in Tibet to suppress Tibetan feudalism in 1959 and initiate the progress of modernization in that country. Whether or not the initial intervention was spontaneously welcomed by most Tibetans as the Spanish and Korean interventions were, the effect of the Chinese intervention in Tibet must be judged by whether or not it was progressive and, of course, by whether or not one welcomes progressive transformations. If one approves of Tibetan Buddhism and the leisure class necessary to practice it (the corollary of which is miserable serfdom for the majority), then one would disapprove of the Chinese intervention that destroyed this way of life. On the other hand, if one supports improved living standards and the intellectual liberation of the common Tibetan peasants, one is likely to approve. The progressiveness of the Chinese intervention is to be judged in terms of its long-term effects on improving living standards, advancing real freedom, and thus rallying the Tibetan people (which it, in fact, seems to have done).

It is sometimes argued by those who have an absolutist attitude about noninterventions (throughout the 1970s including the Maoists, which is strange, given the practice of the Chinese Red Army in Korea and Tibet) that interventions cannot have positive effects in the countries intervened in because people cannot be forced to be free; that is, people have to liberate themselves, and further, normally oppose any foreign interference in their domestic affairs. This position maintains that intervention tends to be counterproductive by both strengthening the opposing forces who are thus given the issue of national independence and anti-intervention to rally support, and denying the masses the important experience of liberating themselves no matter how long or difficult the road.

An axiom of this argument is that an outside power cannot impose an ideology on a people or successfully institutionalize progressive institutions. While this position might reflect an admirable intention, the premise is historically and sociologically incorrect. Institutions and ideologies can be and indeed have often been successfully and more or less permanently imposed. The success of such impositions lies much more in whether or not they prove progressive and thus advantageous or at least sensible to the people on which they have been imposed. Second, the effect of an absolutist, rather than a scientific, commitment to nonintervention would produce the defeat of the popular forces in many civil wars and would also allow the forces of imperialism unrestricted rein to intervene unopposed.



It should be remembered that Christianity was imposed by force on much of the world, including much of the Slavic areas of Europe and onto the blacks transported to the Americas. Likewise, although not to the same extent, Islam was forcibly imposed on areas of Asia. Furthermore, the Catholic interpretation of Christianity was periodically forcibly reinforced against heresies. This was done most brutally in the Spanish Inquisition. Various versions of Protestantism were likewise forcibly imposed on areas where Protestant princes had the upper hand. This long history of the forcible imposition of religions and the corresponding forcible suppression of paganism as well as deviate versions of Christianity (and occasionally of Islam and Judaism) left little residue.

The population of Poland today is no less Catholic because paganism was forcibly suppressed among their ancestors 1,000 years ago. Nor are most U.S. blacks any less Christian because Christianity was forcibly imposed on them. In our times, Soviet Marxism has proven to be extremely successful and popular in Central Asia, even though there was widespread reactionary Islamic opposition to it in the 1920s (see A. Szymanski, 1984:ch. 2). The U.S. central government is no less popular in the old states of the Confederacy today although its authority was imposed by force in the 1860s and 1870s, nor for that matter is the authority of the French Republic in the Vendée (whose popular counterrevolutionary upheaval during the French Revolution was also violently suppressed).

The recitation of these and so many other instances is not meant to be an argument that forcible imposition of ideas and institutions is the most effective, humane, or preferred way in which to institute change. Nor is it meant to advocate forcible imposition either in general or in any specific case. It is purely an historical and sociological fact that forcible imposition is very common and quite often successful. It should be noted, however, that imposition is not always successful, as the examples of Irish Catholicism as well as working-class Marxism in many countries clearly show.

In evaluating the effects of intervention on the country in which it occurs, one must consider the popular reaction, which side in the domestic conflict it allows to triumph, the long-run effects on the side that is able to eventually rally popular opinion, and whether progressive long-run institutional changes are either implemented or undermined. In evaluating the effects of an intervention, one must, as did Rosa Luxemburg (see above), do more than count whether or

actual fact of intervention. In many cases the second aspect, the ability of the media or state propaganda agencies to define reality with little semblance to what has actually occurred in a remote country, is the most important.

Thus, the way the U.S. invasion of Grenada was portrayed domestically as qualitatively different from the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan by *both* the U.S. and Soviet media is a strong case in point. Almost no one in the Soviet Union opposed the Afghan intervention, while almost no one in the United States supported it. Similarly, the Grenada invasion was popular in the United States and roundly condemned in the Soviet Union. The attitudes of the U.S. citizenry (and perhaps most Soviets as well) did not necessarily have anything to do with the actual facts of the situation.

On the other hand, the direct unmediated effects of intervention often override media interpretation. For example, the U.S. invasion of Grenada provoked public fear in Nicaragua and Cuba, which was independent of how anyone's media colored it. This is also true of the relief of Armenians when the Red Army entered their country in 1920. The Turkish Army was in the south of Armenia, poised for the conquest of the entire country—not an especially attractive future for Armenians, who had just been massacred by the millions by the Turks in 1915. No media interpretation of this event would have made much difference to the vast majority of Armenians in this situation. The Red Army would have been greeted warmly no matter what the local papers said.

Part of the international effect of intervention is to pressure others who fear a similar intervention in their country either to compromise with the forces that the intervenor supports (for example, the Sandinistas became more conciliatory with the Contras after the U.S. invasion of Grenada), or become more intransigent, moving toward an alliance with the enemies of the intervenor to protect themselves from possible invasion (for example, the antirevolutionary alliance of European powers against France after the French Revolution). Interventions can either provoke counterinterventions or simply facilitate interventions of another country that justifies them by its media's propaganda about a danger coming from the former intervening power. Thus, the German invasion of Norway and Denmark in 1940 provoked the United Kingdom and United States to occupy Iceland, just as the German invasion of Poland provoked the Soviets to intervene in Finland and the Baltic states. The Soviet



intervention in Afghanistan and the Cubans in Angola allowed the United States to mobilize popular support more easily for its invasion of Grenada and to make an intervention in Nicaragua more feasible.

The effect of not intervening in a country is often to weaken the side to which one is committed by encouraging a feeling that one's system is not strong enough to inspire sufficient support and strength to survive. This creates momentum for opposing forces. The failure to intervene and a consequent victory for one's enemies further encourage others to become more aggressive in their attacks, while at the same time weakening one's friends by undermining their confidence in their friend's ability to assist them. Whether or not one evaluates this effect as bad or good, of course, largely depends on whether one likes or dislikes the system being undermined by the failure to intervene.

For example, the failure of the United States to intervene actively in support of conservative proimperialist dictatorships in the 1970s (for example, in Iran, Nicaragua, Angola, and so on) undermined the confidence of other pro-U.S. dictatorships (for example, Pakistan, Phillipines, El Salvador, and the like) and consequently encouraged the oppositional movements in those countries. The hardening of U.S. policies over Reagan's administration, and finally the invasion of Grenada, strengthened conservative dictatorships all around the world by building up their confidence that the mighty U.S. military would once again actively support them. Concurrently, it weakened the forces of national liberation and revolution, by making them worry about U.S. intervention, and consequently led many to retreat, for example, by expelling Cubans, expressing a greater desire to compromise, and so on. Whether or not one approves of the Grenada invasion must then be judged, in good part, in terms of one's approval or disapproval of its international effect. Supporters of the Nicaraguan revolution tend to be the most adamantly opposed, while supporters of the counterrevolution, tend to be among the most supportive.

Supporters of republicanism and liberalism in Germany, Italy, and the Low Countries in the 1790s were supportive of French intervention for similar reasons. Likewise, supporters of reaction were the most opposed. If the French did not intervene and were to allow reaction to triumph, reaction would have been strengthened everywhere in Europe. Active French military intervention, on the other hand, encouraged liberal revolutionary forces throughout the conti-

nent. Likewise, during the U.S. Civil War, supporters of states' rights, secession, and slavery were generally disheartened by the Northern military intervention, since Lincoln's policies indicated that the Union would act decisively against such tendencies. On the other hand, supporters of abolition, a strong federal government, and an indissoluble union were everywhere strengthened. Whether or not one evaluates Northern intervention as good or bad, then, just like whether or not one evaluates French intervention as good or bad, must largely be judged on the basis of one's feelings about republicanism, liberalism, slavery, and states' rights, *independent* of the specific effects on the immediate situation in the intervened area.

We must evaluate the interventions of socialist countries in a similar logical vein. The effects of Soviet intervention in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan, or the pressure on Poland must primarily be evaluated in terms of the international repercussions on other socialist countries, national liberation, and socialist revolutionary movements. The Soviet insistence that the Hungarian revolution not unwind into a pro-Western capitalist society certainly strengthened the Socialist states in the rest of Eastern Europe. Had Socialist Hungary collapsed, oppositional movements would have been strengthened in Poland, the German Democratic Republic, and elsewhere, while the hegemonic Communist Parties would have been weakened. The Soviet failure to intervene would also have meant that U.S. and other counterrevolutionary forces would have pushed harder in aiding counterrevolutionary movements, not only in Eastern Europe but also in Asia. The Soviets would have been shown to be unwilling to assist their friends.

This is also true of the intervention in Czechoslovakia. Soviet failure to intervene would have weakened the various Communist regimes around the world, while strengthening, by giving heart to, the forces of liberalization. Fidel Castro understood this point well, when to the surprise of many he actively supported the Soviet intervention on the side of the left in that country and used the Soviet intervention to argue that the Soviets also ought to intervene with the various Communist Parties of Latin America against the dominant moderate line (which he identified with the Dubcek tendency in the Czech party) and press these parties into a revolutionary hard line (similar to what they did in Czechoslovakia) (see A. Szymanski, 1979:ch. 7). Again, one's attitude about the Hungarian and Czech interventions must be determined by more than the im-



mediate effect on Hungary and Czechoslovakia. In good part, it must be determined by one's attitudes about the East German and Polish regimes (and whether or not one wanted to see them stronger or weaker), as well as one's attitudes about revolutionary movements in other countries (and whether or not one wants to see them stronger or weaker).

Furthermore, if Hungary and Czechoslovakia had restored capitalism and become pro-Western while the Soviets did not intervene, this would have been an immense propaganda victory for U.S. imperialism and against socialism that would have reverberated throughout the entire world (not just through Eastern Europe). Socialist and liberation movements everywhere would have been disheartened, while the forces of reaction and international capitalism everywhere would have been strengthened. For example, the propaganda services of South Korea and Taiwan would have had a field day in their broadcasts to the North and the mainland, respectively, while their governments would have been strongly encouraged to become more aggressive in their material attempts to promote counterrevolution.

There is, of course, a counterbalance to the international effects of the failure to intervene; and that is the costs of successful intervention. French republican intervention in the Rhineland or northern Italy in the 1790s inflamed anti-French and anti-Jacobin propaganda throughout the rest of Europe and mobilized both the czar and the British to actively mobilize against revolutionary France as well as to repress liberal tendencies at home. It even affected the United States with a wave of anti-Jacobin hysteria culminating in the 1798 Alien and Sedition Acts and the arrest of many leading pro-Jeffersonian newspaper editors. Indeed, it could well have been argued that active French military assistance to the liberal movements in Italy and the Rhineland set back liberal movements in Britain, Russia, and the United States.

This also applies to Soviet military intervention in Finland in 1940, Hungary in 1956, and Czechoslovakia in 1968. Each instance had vast international consequences, especially after being magnified by proimperialist propaganda agencies and the Western media in mobilizing opposition to the world's Communist movements and undermining the strength of the various Communist Parties among intellectuals (although not so much among workers, who tend to be attracted to communism for reasons rather immune to propaganda about interventions in other countries). These military interventions

allowed the Soviet Union to be more credibly painted as an aggressive, expansionist, imperialist power, as bad, or more likely worse than, Nazi Germany or the United States. This caused considerable confusion about who their friends and who their enemies were among many supportive of national liberation and socialism. However distorted or magnified this phenomenon is by the tremendous power of Western media, it must, of course, be considered together with the other effects of interventions.

Thus, to the extent that one is supportive of national liberation and the expansion of socialism, one would tend to be reluctant to support military intervention that feeds the image of socialism and the Soviet Union as an imperialist, aggressive power not to be trusted. However, it must be noted that the efficiency of the Western ideological state apparatuses for defining reality is so great that almost always some incident can be found that can be distorted or magnified to create a strongly negative effect, independent of what the Soviets (or Cubans or Vietnamese) actually do. It should be remembered that the Soviets' extreme (and disarming) caution in not offending the Germans in the 1940-41 period by not responding to German military provocations along their common border did not protect them in the least from German military invasion.

The military intervention in Afghanistan in 1979 as well as the nonintervention in Poland in 1981 had similar effects. When the Soviet Army came to the aid of the Afghan revolutionary government, as well as when pressures were put on the Polish Party in 1981, Western media and state propaganda services (Radio Free Europe, Voice of America, and the like) had a field day. Day after day headlines emphasized the brutality of the Soviets and the heroism of the Afghan "freedom fighters" and militant Polish unionists in "defying" Soviet "imperialism" against all odds. These images repeatedly imposed on most homes in the nonsocialist world could not but have had a negative effect on most people's images of the Soviet Union, building up the notion that it was as bad or worse than such twentieth century aggressors as Hitler or the United States. The ammunition given to the Western media by the Afghan intervention clearly had a negative effect on socialist and national liberation movements around the world, including their willingness to accept the Soviet Union as a friend. However, it should be pointed out that, had the Afghan issue never made news in the West, a multitude of other issues were tending to be used to accomplish the same effect at the



same time (Ethiopia, the Vietnamese "boat people," Iran, East European refugees, Soviet troops in Cuba, Zaire, and so on).

Actually, the fact that the Soviets did *not* intervene in Poland seems to have made little difference. The Soviets were painted by the Western media as imperialist aggressors, even when they did not use their military. In fact, it would have been difficult to see how the Soviets would have had a more negative image painted of their role in Poland even if they had sent in troops as they did in Czechoslovakia in 1968. A credible argument could be made that the Western ideological state apparatuses are so strong that it makes little difference what the Soviets actually do, and thus the Soviets might as well act in terms of the immediate effect of their actions on the specific countries concerned, ignoring negative international propaganda (which is only marginally affected by reality).

In summary, it appears that the total international effect of the Hungarian, Czech, and Afghan military interventions, as well as the Polish nonintervention, probably benefited the forces of world socialism and weakened the forces of world imperialism more than it did the opposite. The heartening effect of Soviet intervention on other socialist states as well as on leftist movements in Latin America would seem to have exceeded the marginal effect of the negative image of the Soviet Union and socialism created by the media in the hands of their enemies. This becomes even clearer when it is set against the effect of what would have happened had pro-Western conservative regimes been restored in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Afghanistan. Such a course of events would have been tremendous propaganda victories for proimperialist and antisocialist forces, heartening reactionary tendencies everywhere in the world, while systematically demoralizing revolutionaries. Thus, whether one evaluates such interventions as that of the Soviets in Afghanistan in 1979 or the Soviet pressure on Poland in 1981 as good or bad must largely be determined by whether or not one identifies with the international forces of national liberation and socialism or with world capitalism.

A third major effect of intervention is the effect on the military position of the state that intervenes. Clearly whether or not the German Army occupied the Rhineland in 1936 was of most serious concern to the French, as was the German occupation of Czechoslovakia and most of Poland in 1938 and 1939 to the Soviet Union. The placement of the German Army in these areas could well have justified a

preemptive military attack on Germany by France and the Soviet Union in order to avoid what was soon to happen—the German invasion of these countries from these territories (that is, if one were a French or Soviet nationalist; if one were profascist, this would be an entirely different matter, with the rhetoric of nonintervention serving Nazism well). This also applies to one's evaluation of the respective British and U.S. military occupations of Iceland in 1940 and 1941 in order to keep it from falling into the hands of the Germans, who would have used it as an important base for submarines and aircraft to interdict military supplies to the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union. The World War II occupation of Iceland clearly must be evaluated primarily in terms of its military effects on the situation in Europe, and not in terms of whether or not the Icelandic people welcomed it, whether it was progressive for Iceland, the uses to which it would be put by German propaganda, or the effects it would have on driving neutral countries such as Ireland, Sweden, or the Latin American or Islamic countries toward closer ties with Nazi Germany, Italy and Japan.

The Soviet military intervention in Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in 1940 and in the Western Ukraine and Belorussia in 1939 were primarily of the same nature as the British and U.S. military occupations of Iceland at the same time. The primary motive of both was to strengthen defenses against German aggression and thus they must largely be evaluated in terms of their effectiveness in realizing this goal as well as of the worthiness of this goal itself. That is, how important was it to defend against German aggression and how much of a difference did expanding one's defensive perimeter actually make? And, of course, the military effect must be weighed against both the international repercussions and the direct effects on the countries immediately affected.

A good case can be made that the expansion of Leningrad's defense system by the Soviet occupation of part of Finland and all of the Baltic countries in 1940 made the difference between Leningrad falling or not falling to the Nazis in 1941–42, and that the occupation of the Baltic countries plus the Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia in 1939 gave the Soviets more time and space to organize their defenses in order to eventually reverse the course of the war with the Germans. But whether or not this were the case, it must be a good part of the grounds on which to evaluate the Soviet military interventions of 1939–40, just as the effects of the British and U.S. occupa-



tions of Iceland on the battle of the North Atlantic must be of primary concern in evaluating that action. Thus, whether or not a logical person condemns or supports Soviet, British, and U.S. expansion of their defensive perimeters in 1930-40 must in good part be judged on the basis of how important one considered the defense of Britain and the Soviet Union against German invasion.

A primary argument given by the Soviets for their interventions in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, as well as for their concern about developments in Poland (and to a lesser degree about their intervention in Afghanistan), is their national security interests, namely, protecting themselves against still another invasion from the West. The Soviets never tire of pointing out: that about 6 million Russians were killed in the German invasion and occupation of 1915-18; that there were military interventions by over a dozen countries during the 1918-20 civil war, including the Polish invasion of the Ukraine and Belorussia in 1920; and above all that the German invasion of 1941-45 resulted in the loss of 20 million lives and the devastation of the western Soviet Union. The Soviets remember well that the three major invasions of their country in the twentieth century have all occurred through the North European plain and thus that Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and above all Poland and East Germany appear to be vital areas in which to have friendly governments. They, likewise, never tire of reminding the West that the United States and the United Kingdom agreed at the Yalta Conference in 1945 that this Soviet concern was indeed legitimate and that the Soviets thus had a perpetual right to insure friendly governments in this region.

Almost all Soviet people, regardless of their feelings about the other policies of the Soviet Communist Party, share in their concern that their country not be invaded again and thus share their government's concern about guaranteeing that hostile regimes be prevented from coming into power in Central Europe. It would seem that one's evaluation of Soviet interventions in Central Europe must at least partially be based on one's feelings about whether the Soviet concern about military invasion is justified, whether or not one would oppose, support, or be indifferent to such an invasion, and whether or not the assurance of friendly governments in Europe in today's nuclear world makes much real difference for Soviet security.

It can be argued that Soviet interventions in the Baltic countries, Poland and Finland in 1939 and 1940, were justified (from the point of view of Soviet military security), as was the British and U.S. occu-

pations of Iceland on the grounds that the German threat was immediate and most dangerous and that the occupations of these territories made an important difference in defensive capacities. In contrast, it can be argued that the Soviet interventions in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Afghanistan and the pressure on Poland were not justified because the Soviet Union was not under a real threat of invasion; that is, the Soviets were paranoid, and/or, to the extent they were under a real threat it was nuclear, and thus the assurance of friendly governments around their borders makes no difference in assisting their defense. It can also, of course, be argued that it would be good if the Soviet Union were invaded and destroyed by the West or, at least, that it makes little or no difference. If one were to hold to any of these positions, then clearly one would not positively evaluate Soviet interventions, at least in terms of their military effects. On the other hand, if one felt, for example, that the U.S. nuclear strategy of escalation and developing superior techniques of conventional warfare were to once again make the threat of military invasion of the Soviet Union from the North European plain a real danger, and, of course, if one were opposed to an invasion of the Soviet Union, one would clearly give considerable weight to the potential military effect of friendly or hostile governments on the Central European plain (together with the international and specific effects of socialist or capitalist regimes in this region).

### **Conclusion: The Intervention in Afghanistan and the Nonintervention in Poland**

Even though the Soviets have long been used to a friendly regime in Afghanistan, it would seem to make little real difference for the military security of the Soviet Union whether or not a friendly or hostile government was in power in that country. The Soviets have long lived with hostile regimes in Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, and for that matter China, and thus an anti-Soviet regime in Kabul would appear to make little difference. This is especially the case since Afghanistan is of little strategic value. Given its remoteness and terrain, it is most unlikely that any attack on any vital areas of the Soviet Union would ever be mounted from its territory. Thus, arguments that vital Soviet national security interests are affected by whether or not intervention occurs in Afghanistan should carry little



weight, whether or not one likes or dislikes the Soviet Union. Unlike the question of interventions on the North European plain from which devastating invasions of the Soviet Union have traditionally come, the question of the Afghan intervention should reasonably be decided only in terms of the domestic effect on the constellation of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary forces in Afghanistan, as well as on the international repercussions of such intervention on revolutionary and antirevolutionary forces throughout the rest of the world.

The ultimate evaluation of one country's intervention in another is not an easy matter, even when one's commitments to one side or the other in Warsaw or Kabul, as well as in Managua, Havana, Beirut, or Luanda is clear. One must carefully weigh the short-run effects on progressive forces in the countries where intervention occurs and the long-run effect on popular support, vitalization, and above all on progress (in terms of the forces of production and human freedom). More than this, one must take into account the international repercussions, both positive and negative, both real and magnified and distorted, as well as the military security of one's friends and enemies. It can thus be the case that people with similar political commitments could still disagree about a given intervention because their honest evaluations of its total effects were different. But more often, people disagree about a given intervention either because their political *commitments* are different or because they adopt a moralistic (for example, all interventions are inherently bad; anything the Soviet Union does is good), rather than a logical and scientific, examination of whether or not the total effects of a specific intervention strengthen or weaken those to whom one is committed.

Honest people then can disagree about the Soviet role in either Afghanistan or Poland. Many of those sympathetic to socialism could, after carefully considering the facts, quite easily support or oppose the Soviet position in these two countries. People who think that those committed to an egalitarian transformation of the world can easily (or without careful investigation of the situations in both countries, as well as of the wider reverberations of intervention) either unequivocally support or condemn the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan or the pressure on Poland are mistaken.

Having said all this, I will tread on the dangerous ground. In balance, it appears that the Soviet intervention on the side of the Afghan revolution: (1) has made a vital contribution to the short-run

victory of the revolutionary forces, preventing the likely triumph of an especially vicious counterrevolution that would have brought a dark age in that country; and (2) given the experience of the Soviet suppression of a similar counterrevolutionary movement in Central Asia in the 1920s, it is likely that the material advance of the masses of the Afghan people under a progressive regime will result in the rallying of most Afghans around the kind of moderate progressive government advocated by the now dominant Parcham faction. Thus, insofar as the immediate and long-run domestic effects of the Soviet military intervention of 1979 are concerned, if one favors the kinds of reforms advocated by the Afghan government and opposes what would be implemented with a victory of Islamic reaction, then one must support the Soviet intervention on these grounds.

In terms of its international reverberations, the Soviet intervention was the occasion of tremendous worldwide anticommunist propaganda, which was, in good part, used to help mobilize the U.S. people to once again willingly support direct U.S. military interventions such as that in Grenada, as well as to generally discredit pro-Soviet revolutionary movements, especially in the Islamic world. On the other hand, this must be counterbalanced by the negative effects on the morale of the world's revolutionary movements had Islamic reaction succeeded in overthrowing the revolutionary regime in Kabul, and the symmetrical morale boost this would have given to counterrevolution in other parts of the world, such as Nicaragua. It must also be considered in the light of the Western media's ability to structure reality. Its power is so great that regardless of whether or not the Soviets intervened in Afghanistan, U.S. public opinion would have been mobilized for interventions like that of Grenada (in fact, the portrayal of the Tehran embassy seizure played a more decisive role here). In balance, then, it would appear that a careful analysis of the facts of the Afghan revolution together with all aspects of the effects of intervention would lead one who is opposed to revolution in general to oppose Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and one who supports social revolution in general to support it.

Perhaps the most important fact about Soviet intervention in Poland in 1981 was that no actual Soviet military intervention occurred. USSR intervention was limited to the possibility of some kind of military action in the event of the situation in Poland deteriorating to the point where the Soviets felt their vital security interests were seriously undermined. Nevertheless, from reading the Western press



one gets the feeling that the Soviets actually directly intervened in the manner of the United States in the Dominican Republic, Vietnam, or Grenada. Indeed, it appears that the U.S. State Department and many anticommunists all around the world were hoping for a USSR military intervention because of the immense anti-Soviet reaction that this would have provoked around the world. But since this never happened, an ambience of a Soviet intervention on par with those of the United States has been created. In fact, it may well have been the case that the Polish crisis of 1980-81 would have been resolved in the same way without the possibility of Soviet military intervention in the background.

In any event, the Soviet pressure on Poland in 1981 has to be evaluated, like any other intervention, in terms of its total effects on the relative strength of socialism and capitalism. Any decision about whether or not such an intervention was bad or good, of course, must be decided on the basis of whether or not one wanted to advance socialism or capitalism.

The situation in Poland was more difficult to evaluate than that in Afghanistan. While the struggle in Afghanistan is between unequivocally reactionary and clearly progressive forces, the constellation of forces in Poland is much less clear-cut. The oppositional movement in Poland had an enormous working-class base (and one that was neither opposed to socialism, in principle, nor for the most part directly and immediately threatening a violent counterrevolution). The actual program of Solidarity, totally unlike that of the Afghan Islamic reaction, was, in good part, progressive in its advocacy of a Yugoslav model of socialism. Furthermore, the party leadership in Poland had lost its revolutionary vitality. Indeed, Polish socialism, in spite of its tremendous accomplishments, was stagnant, bureaucratized, technocratic, and, to a degree, corrupt. Polish socialism was and still is very badly in need of a deep and thorough revitalization stemming from the working class itself.

There was a potential that the rank-and-file Solidarity movement could have been the source of that energy. However, the danger, largely coming from the social democratic middle-class leadership of Solidarity (especially the influence of KOR), as well as the reactionary Polish church and revitalized reactionary Polish nationalism, of a thoroughgoing counterrevolution that would have destroyed most of the progress made by the working class over the previous generation was most real. Nevertheless, there is no substitute

for the experience of the working class itself. In the last analysis they themselves must make history on the basis of their own will. There is little doubt that within a few years of a Polish counterrevolution that there would have been a massive revitalized working-class revolutionary movement against a new regime dominated by the church hierarchy and nationalist intellectuals in alliance with the NATO powers. This, indeed, would have probably been a most effective way to reinvigorate Polish socialism. Thus, those committed to the advancement of socialism and knowing the (rather tragic) condition of its Polish form might well be forced to the conclusion that on the basis of the long-run consequences for Poland itself (in spite of the short run negative effects) that events should have been allowed to take their course without either Soviet or Polish Army intervention.

However, there is, of course, much more at stake than the long-run effects on working-class socialism in Poland, namely the strongly felt security interests of the Soviet Union itself and the other Socialist regimes in Eastern Europe (not the least of which is the German Democratic Republic), as well as the international reverberations of a short-run counterrevolutionary restoration in Poland. It is most difficult to determine the extent to which the existence of nuclear weapons makes Soviet fears of an invasion through Germany and Poland paranoid and thus their concerns about a friendly Eastern Europe misplaced. But it is easily understood why the Soviets feel the way they do about this matter. I do not feel competent to make a judgment on the facts of this issue and can appreciate both positions.

As for the international reverberations of intervention/nonintervention in Poland, there are clearly enormous effects both positive and negative, whether or not there was an intervention and whatever one's political commitments. The fact that the Polish opposition had such a strong working-class base and the fact that the Polish Army suppressed the Solidarity movement were strong propaganda against socialism and the Soviet Union throughout the West. It should be noted, however, that events in Poland had less of an impact in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, where repressions qualitatively greater than anything that happened in Poland are facts of daily life.

Counterbalancing this negative effect were the facts that the distortion and magnification of the Polish events by the Western media succeeded in coloring the Soviets as aggressors even though they did not actively intervene, and, in general, that the Western media to a great extent define and color socialism and the Soviet Union as neg-



ative no matter what the reality is. A more important counterbalance is the tremendous demoralization effect that the victory of a counterrevolution in Poland would have had not only in the rest of Eastern Europe but also around the world. Bringing down the Socialist government of the most populous Socialist state in Europe outside the Soviet Union and the failure of the Soviets to do anything about it would have sent shock waves through Central America, East Asia, and South Africa. Counterrevolution would have been strengthened around the globe, and the forces of national liberation set back. Indeed, such international reverberations together with the fact that the Polish military's suppression of Solidarity did much to take Poland out of the headlines (and thus reduced it as a source of daily antisocialist propaganda) were strong reasons for those supportive of socialist movements around the world to welcome Polish martial law (as well as Soviet encouragement of it) and for those opposed to socialist revolution to oppose it.

Thus, while understanding both those who feel that the domestic effects of martial law should overrule all other effects and thus the Soviet encouragement of the Polish military should be evaluated as bad from the point of view of the long-term vitalization of Polish socialism, *and* the Soviet point of view that their vital military security interests were at stake and thus that a counterrevolutionary movement could not be allowed to triumph in the short run, this author evaluates the Polish event primarily in terms of its international reverberations. In balance, it appears that the net effect of martial law was to advance the development of socialism and national liberation outside of Poland and the advanced capitalist countries more than the absence of martial law would have, and thus that those who identify with liberation movements and the advance of socialism should have welcomed the Polish military's actions and those who are opposed to national liberation movements and socialism should have opposed martial law.

The first of these was the establishment of the city of Boston in 1630. The second was the establishment of the city of New York in 1624. The third was the establishment of the city of Philadelphia in 1682. The fourth was the establishment of the city of London in 1666. The fifth was the establishment of the city of Paris in 1660. The sixth was the establishment of the city of Rome in 1660. The seventh was the establishment of the city of Constantinople in 1660. The eighth was the establishment of the city of Moscow in 1660. The ninth was the establishment of the city of St. Petersburg in 1703. The tenth was the establishment of the city of Berlin in 1698. The eleventh was the establishment of the city of Vienna in 1683. The twelfth was the establishment of the city of Prague in 1620. The thirteenth was the establishment of the city of Warsaw in 1695. The fourteenth was the establishment of the city of Amsterdam in 1602. 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